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A Note...

We are quickly approaching the end of our second year of publishing Sketch Magazine. Sketch has honestly been one of the biggest surprises and most enjoyable projects that I've worked on in the comic field...

And Sketch's future looks great. We've been very lucky to line up some major interviews such as Neil Gaiman (Sandman and American Gods), J. Scott Campbell (Danger Girl), and next issue's talk with Frank Cho, the creative force behind Liberty Meadows.

Andy, Adam, and a great new cover piece by Joe Kubert - can you say "WOW!"? ! The combination of all three incredible Kuberts makes this issue of Sketch one of the coolest yet. Andy and Adam both share information that any Sketch reader will benefit from. I know I did. Thanks, Kuberts!

With this issue's Kubert interview we welcome Bill Baker to the Sketch stable. Bill works for many comic industry magazines, and we appreciate him including Sketch in his busy schedule. Bill will be conducting many of Sketch's upcoming feature interviews, and I'm glad to have him aboard.

We are constantly working on offering the information that you readers request. This issue we bring you our first column on animation, covering some of the basics you may be familiar with. In future issues we will be offering articles on Flash 5, a program that allows you to create interactive displays, trailers, and animations that can be played on any computers.

Take care,



B.

bob@bluelinepro.com

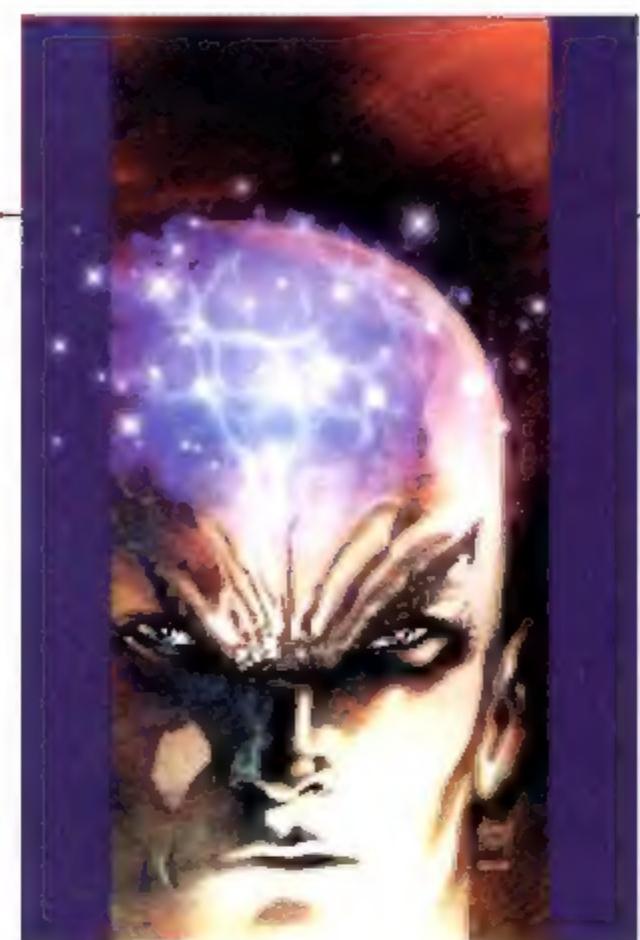
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by bill baker

andy kubert interview

by bill baker



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**Bob Hickey**

Along with his duties with Sketch Magazine, he has been the creative force behind Blood & Roses, StormQuest and Tempered Steele. He currently has a new Blood and Roses series in the works along with his new creator owned series Race Danger which both should be appearing at BLP Comics. Bob is one of the co-founders of Blue Line Productions. www.bluelinepro.com He can be reached at bob@bluelinepro.com

**Beau Smith**

created and writes Parts Unknown currently at Image Comics, writer of The Undertaker for Chaos Comics, The Tenth, Wynonna Earp, Spawn: Book Of Souls, Wolverine/Shi, Batman/Wildcat and the upcoming cross over-Xena/Wonder Woman and several Star Wars stories for Dark Horse. www.sacredstudios.com/partsunknown

Tom Bierbaum, with wife Mary, has scripted such comics as Legion of Super-Heroes and The Heckler for DC Comics, Xena and Return to Jurassic Park for Topps Comics, Star for Image Comics and Dead Kid Adventures, a creator owned project by Knight Press.

**Flint Henry**'s comic

career began in the waning days of the independent market of the '80's, where his frenetic and violent style enjoyed a popular run on the fondly remembered Grimjack at First Comics. Over the years to follow, some personal favorites include Lawdog; a creator owned character done with longtime friend Chuck Dixon from Marvel/Epic, as well as numerous Batman related projects from DC. He's also produced a variety of comic product for Todd Toys (now McFarlane Toys), Image, SQP Inc, and Chaos!, as well as Eclipse, Dark Horse, Palladium, and others.



M²a.k.a. Mike Maydak has been taken under-wing as the padawan in training at the Blue Line Pro ranch. He is learning much from the experienced crew at Sketch about the comic industry and has mastered the technique of "getting lunch". He often contributes in the form of graphic design, writing, and editorial work. He is currently attending school at NKU with a Journalism major. On the side, he works on his fantasy novel.

Bill Baker

Since entering the field in late 1998, Bill Baker has established himself as one of the preeminent interviewers in the comics journalism community. After getting his start as a reporter on a now-defunct website, he graduated to doing both long and short form interviews for two of the best known comic book sites on the web, Comic Book Resources and Wizard World. This lead to his articles and interviews appearing in print magazines, including *Comic Book Marketplace* and *Comic Buyers' Guide*, as well as *Fantastic Visions: The Art of Matt Busch*, published by Avatar Press in 2001. Bill's work combines a wide-ranging knowledge of both the art form and its practitioners with a deep and abiding respect for its rich history. If there's any single aspect that sets Bill's work apart from most reportage, it's the relaxed, conversational tone that pervades his interviews.

Mitch Byrd's clean, open style has filled the pages of a variety of comics as diverse as Malibu's Dinosaurs For Hire, DC's Guy Gardner: Warrior, Starship Troopers for Dark Horse, and Jaguar God at Verotik, to name just a few. He's currently working on a number of freelance projects and illustrations for White Wolf, as well as looking forward to the release of *The Art of Mitch Byrd*, a collection of his non-sequential work from SQP.

**Klaus**

Born at the beginning of recorded history, KLAUS was cryogenically frozen by a coalition of secret societies, for reasons still unclear to this day. He was released from stasis in the early Seventies (along with his "maternal" twin FIGG) to achieve one goal: Create the masterpiece that would be called *SUPER GRAPE*.

Now living a seemingly normal life in the Midwest.

He also enjoys spending time with family and friends.



Stephen Steinbach is a Animation Instructor at the Art Institute of Dallas.

Before that, he was a rough In-betweener-breakdown animator for Warner Bros feature Animation. And, a graduate from Cal Arts.

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Comic books are a fun media and one of the few that anyone could create their own visions to share with others. Blue Line Productions goals are aimed toward the enhancement of art through knowledge and quality art supplies. No matter what it takes we make sure that the reader has the information that they are wanting.

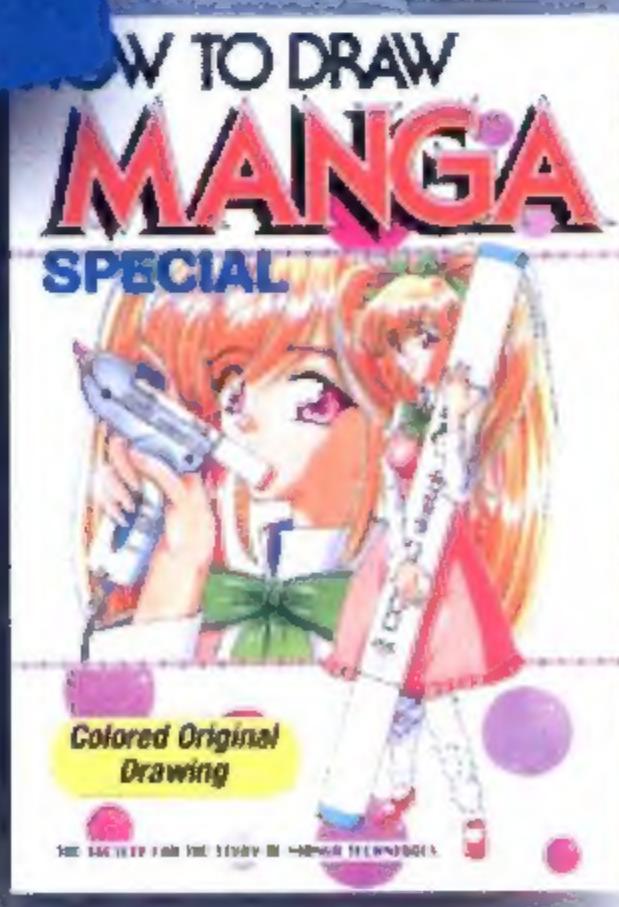
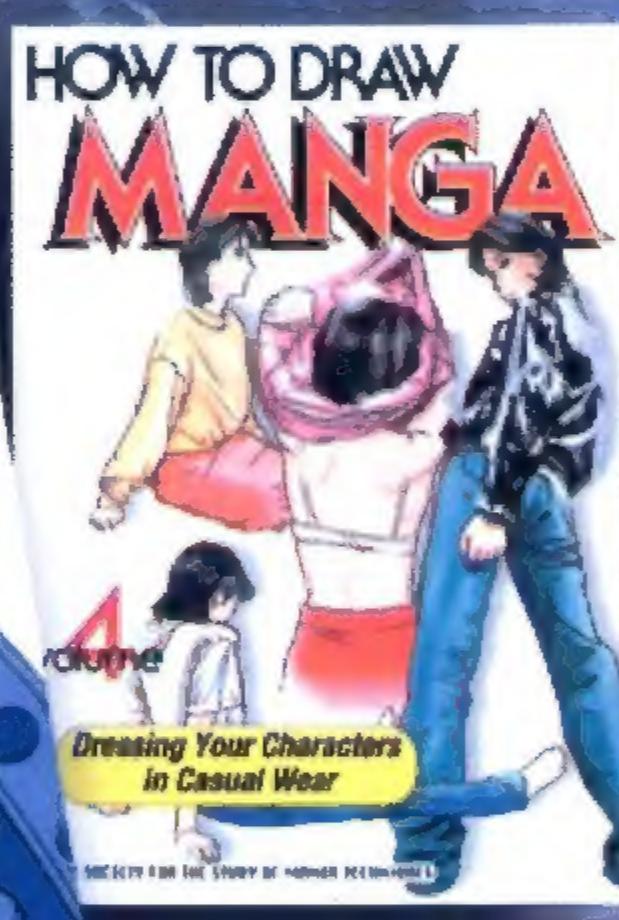
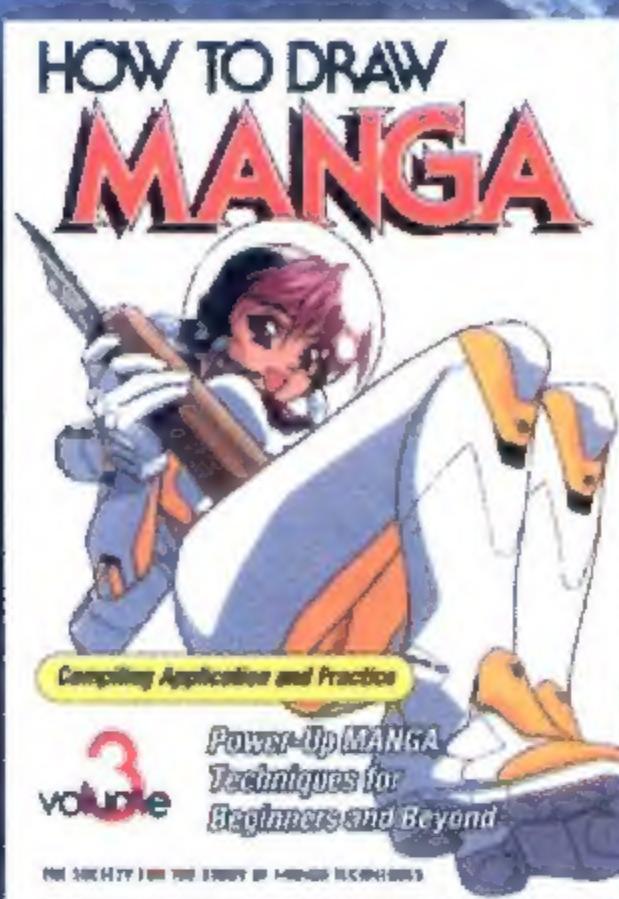
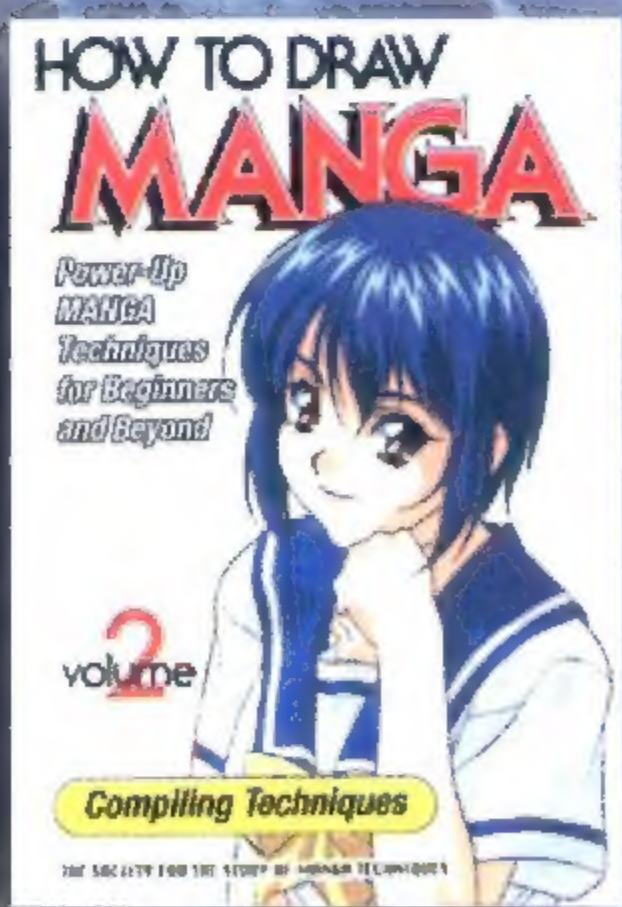
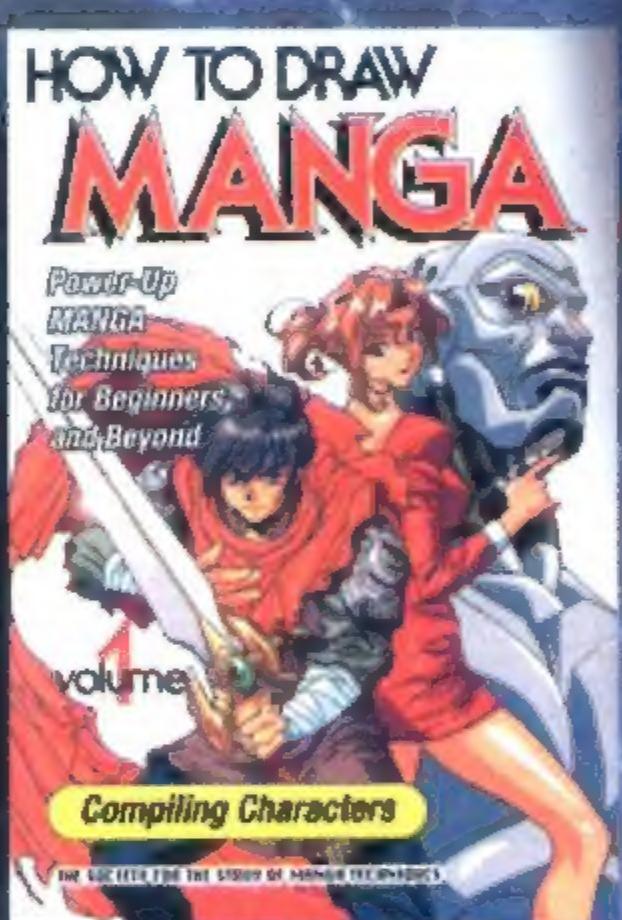
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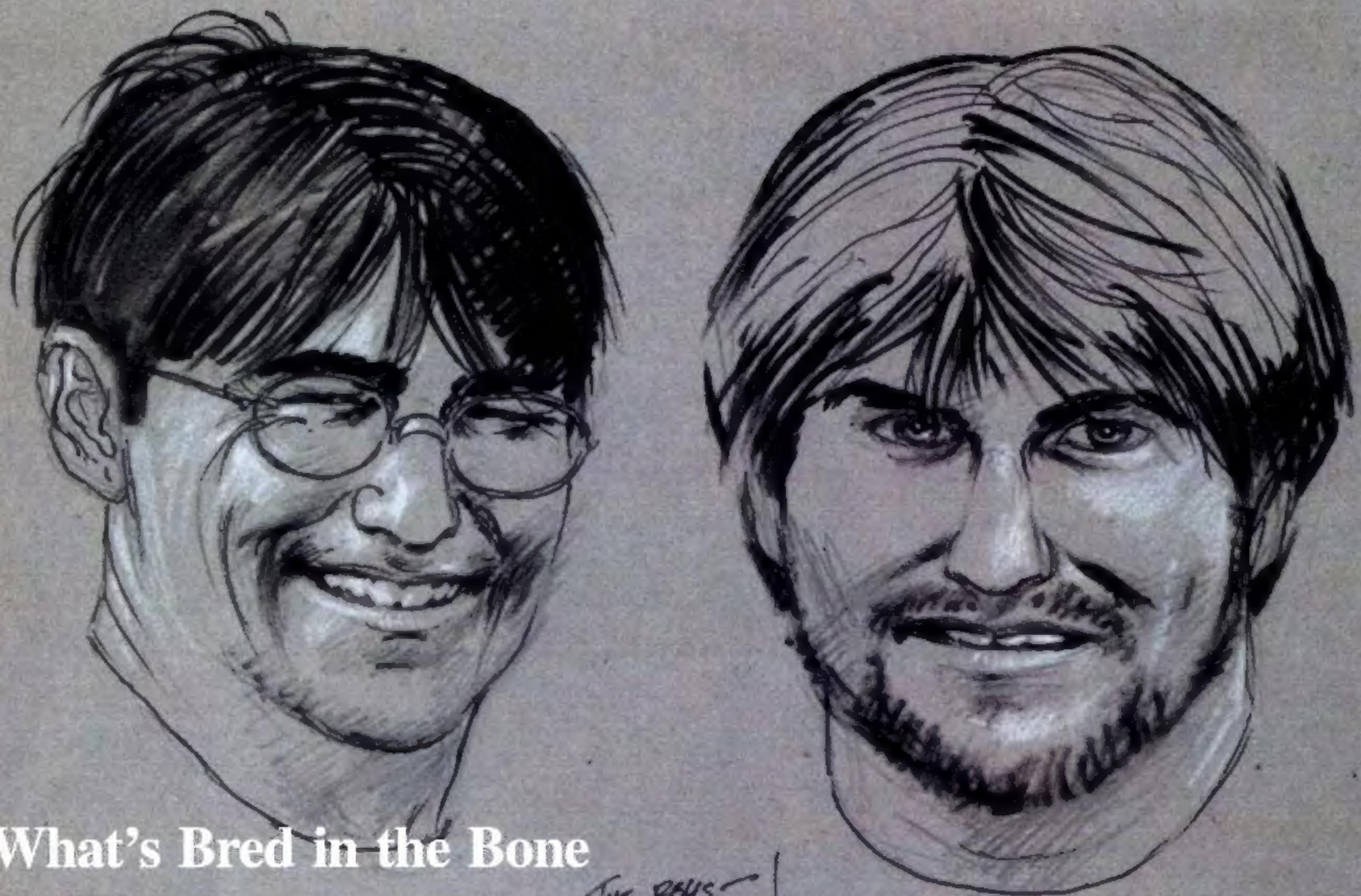
Attention Creators!

If you're involved in the comic book industry or want to be involved in the comic book industry, write in and let us know how we are doing and what can we do better. Our Letter's Forum is open to all. Voice your opinion, share your experience with others, or challenge our columnist on their technique and state your own and approach to the subject. We want to hear from you!

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What's Bred in-the Bone

THE BOYS —
Joe
Kubert

The art and careers of Los Kubert Bros., Adam and Andy

by Bill Baker

Illustration by Joe Kubert

For those of us standing on the outside, it often seems inevitable when a young lion blessed with a last name like Buckler, Romita or Kubert gets a plum assignment. But that ain't necessarily the case, folks. It's easy to ignore, and easier to forget, that there's a major difference between being a child prodigy and the child of a prodigy. Even more, we often gloss over the simple fact that even the most naturally talented individual has spent hours upon hours — quite often years — developing and defining their innate talent. And that's not even touching on the hard nosed business side of things, like getting your foot in the editors' doors ... and not only getting that all-important first assignment, but those even more essential second and third gigs.

Take, for example, the Kubert brothers, Adam and Andy. Blessed with a surname that brings to mind a slew of iconic images and characters that span the decades from the Golden to the Silver ages and beyond, to this modern Indy Age, on the surface it seems only natural that these two fine artists should be drawing the monthly adventures of Marvel's mighty mutants. However, that would overlook the years of hard work that each brother has dedicated to learning, evolving and then establishing not only their own styles, but careers as well. Simply put, if these two chips off the Kubert rock inherited anything from their legendary father, it's just as likely that it was his drive, sense of loyalty or perseverance as it was a bent for the narrative arts.

In the following interviews, Adam and Andy discuss their early lives and what kind of real impact their father had on their careers and styles. They also talk about their earliest work in the business (which might surprise those who expect that they began by penciling or inking), how they learned to draw, their current and past approaches to creating art, and even give a hint of what we might expect from them in the future. From their early work on the war books and *Heavy Metal*, to their middle periods drawing Adam Strange and Wolverine, to their present assignments on the incredibly successful *Ultimate X-Men* and *Origin* books, these two exceptional creators lay out the details of their careers and creations for us with the same clarity and dynamics as you'll find in one of their pages.



What's Bred in the Bone, pt. 1

Adam Kubert's Ultimate Adventures in the Pencil Lead-Slinging Business

by Bill Baker

attention to it?

Kubert: I always drew when I was a kid, but my dad never sat me down and taught me, "This is how you do this," or, "This is how you do that." I never really thought I wanted to be a comic book artist, but I always liked to draw. I always liked to doodle, things like that. I always loved to watch my dad draw. It was like magic the way the stuff would just appear on paper ... still is. If you've ever seen my dad draw, you'd know what I mean.

One thing that my dad did do was teach me how to letter when I was 12 or 13 years old. So, rather than go out and get a real job like newspaper delivery or whatever, I lettered comic books. I didn't really think much about it. I was able to put some money together and buy stuff like minibikes and dirt bikes myself. Which is exactly what I did.

Sketch: Do you remember any of the books that you lettered back then? I assume they were DC titles...

Kubert: Yeah, they were war comics. They were ones my dad edited, mostly. I think my first job was a Russ Heath *Battle Album*.

When I'm lettering, it's kind of funny; I don't really read the books as I'm lettering. I'm lettering the stuff word by word without reading it per se. I just kind of transcribed [them]. You know what I mean?

Sketch: Right, you were more concerned with copying the words correctly than what they meant. So, it sounds like you actually might have beat [Jim] Shooter as being the youngest person to work in comics?

Kubert: I think my dad was; I think he started drawing when he was 11. But I was on [the TV show] *What's My Line* as the youngest professional letterer when I was 13.

Sketch: Really?

Kubert: Yep. My family watched the show at night, and my mom said, "Why don't you [go on that show]? You have an

unusual job." So I sent in a letter, and they accepted me. I went to New York and bang; I was on the show. It was pretty cool, [but] I was nervous as hell. [General laughter] I remember "signing in", that's what all the guests had to do right before they sat down to be questioned. They asked me to letter my name when I signed in. I still think that was dead giveaway ... Soupy Sales guessed my occupation and he was only the second celebrity to ask questions.

Funny thing. I remember one of the questions Soupy asked was if I was some sort of calligrapher. At the time I didn't know what the hell calligraphy meant. I had to turn to Larry Blyden and ask him if I was or not. He nodded yes.

Sketch: Did it help get you any new status at school, or help with the girls?

Kubert: No, no. I don't remember anyone from school even noticing. And the show gave me such stupid prizes. I won Sarah Coventry jewelry. I won a dress. St.



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Sketch: Before you went to the Kubert School, did you do much drawing? Was it something that you learned at his knee, so to speak, and from watching him work, or was that something that was just so normal and everyday that you didn't pay any real



Mary's towels — which, by the way I still have. The best thing I got was \$50 in cash. [General laughter.]

Sketch: *But, hey, you were all set for gifts for mom for a while!*

Kubert: Oh, yeah. I gave it all to her. Gaah, I still remember it was this green polka dot dress. I could even tell, at 13, that it was a god awful dress. I'm sure my mom just stuck it in the bottom of the

drawer.

But it was definitely a lot of fun. I met Lionel Hampton, Soupy Sales, Kitty Carlisle, and Greg Morris who was from *Mission Impossible*. Those were the celebrity guests that made up the panel. And Larry Blyden was the M.C. It was just a cool fun thing. [General laughter.]

Sketch: *What kind of tools did you use to letter?*

Kubert: I was originally taught to letter way back when — 1971 or so — by my dad. (For the record, my dad also taught John Costanza to letter.) I used a Flicker B6 speedball dip pen for regular lettering and a Flicker B5 for bold, both of which I don't think they make any longer. A Flicker was a pen tip that actually opened up, so it could be cleaned out easily. In fact, what I used to do was file the point down until it was a comfortable size to letter with. I would line up the pages by putting an Ames lettering guide onto a T-square and rule out all the lines. I know they still make these, it's actually part of the art kit that all new students at my dad's school have to buy ... lucky them. One of the ways my dad "tested" me to see if I had the patience to letter when I was a kid was to make me line up a couple of 10" by 15" sheets of paper top to bottom, front and back by using just a T-square and a ruler. I did it, and I remember that I only practiced the alphabet on those two sheets ... over and over and over. Guess I showed him I had the patience for lettering; I know I didn't quite have the skill.

I started to use a Stadler-Mars rapidograph pen when I began to do all of *Heavy Metal* magazine's lettering back in '84. This made it quicker to get the stuff done because I didn't have to dip the pen. I would use a #2 for regular lettering and a #2.5 for the bold type. I would border the pages with the 2.5. I would usually use a dip pen, and still do, when I would ink in the sound effects, mostly because the dip pens would give me a more consistent line. Titles would also be done the same way. All the titles that I did for *Heavy Metal* were hand rendered, although a lot of them were traced and altered over an existing typestyle.

Knowing how to letter has come in very handy for me over the years. While I was on [*Uncanny*] *X-Men*, I decided to letter the sound effects right into the panels which the inker would in turn ink. Tim Townsend didn't quite know what to make of it at first ... he said he was lousy at lettering ... heh. But I think by doing this the sound effects would fit better and be less obtrusive, rather than being made to fit after the fact. It would also guarantee me that a sound ef-

fect wouldn't cover an important part of the drawing. I don't think Richard Starkings minded much, it was less he had to do.

For a while I was also lettering the logos onto my covers for the same reasons. I would manipulate them a bit ... stretch or pull or invert ... whatever it took to make the cover look a little more interesting and a little different. Sometimes Marvel would go with it, sometimes they wouldn't ... but I would always try (and still do).

Sketch: *So you never thought you'd grow up to draw comics when you were younger?*

Kubert: No, I didn't. In fact, I went away to college for medical illustration at first. The reason I did that was twofold; I really liked science, and I really liked to draw, so I put that together. I sent out applications, and away I went. I went to Rochester Institute of Technology [in upstate New York]. I have a four year degree, a Bachelors Degree.

And I think one of the reasons I also went away was to pretty much make my own path, so to speak. My dad was so well known, and I guess I just wanted to do my own thing. All through college, I was drawing things out of my head. Concert posters and things like that.

[Then, once] I got out, I was actually doing medical illustration [for a living], and I really didn't enjoy it that much. And I thought, "Geez, why fight it? There's this great school. Free tuition. Good teacher. Why fight it?" So that's when I decided that I'd just go through my dad's program, and that's what I'm going to do.

Sketch: *What were some of the best things you learned while in school?*

Kubert: At Rochester, or my dad's school?

Sketch: *Both.*

Kubert: OK. At Rochester, I think socialization was the biggest thing. I still have a lot of good friends, today, that I met in college some 20 years ago. Really, just getting your jollies out. [General laughter] The whole college scene.

I mean, I learned anatomy [at RIT]. I actually took anatomy, and physiology, and biology. I learned about muscles, and I had this gross anatomy course where we actually had our own cadavers that we would study from. And I had painting courses. There were a lot of different experiences there that I wouldn't, and didn't, get at my dad's school. My dad's school is a lot smaller. It's more technical. Everyone there knows exactly what they want to do. There's not a lot of girls there, you know? [General laughter.]



Sketch: Right.

Kubert: It's a small community of artists, and a college is a college. There were fraternities and sororities, and parties and sports, and it was a technical school, also. There was all that other stuff that I think I needed to get away and experience, also.

Sketch: How about at your dad's school? Was that where you really began to learn storytelling?

Kubert: Absolutely. That's where I really learned to draw out of my head. Like I started to say before, at RIT I did draw out of my head, but it wasn't very good! [Laughter] But at my dad's school, they broke it down and showed you how to do the figure out of your head, and that's really where I learned to do it. At my dad's is where I learned storytelling, and storyboarding, and things like that. Narrative art, which I really didn't learn up at RIT. I mean, I could draw a kidney or heart out of my head, but I couldn't do a figure running at you, or walking away from you, or whatever. And nobody taught that [at RIT]. I had a lot of figure drawing, but they wanted you to "feel" the figure, and it was a little arty, I guess. They went more for the feeling of art, rather than the technical aspect of it.

Sketch: Did that artsy approach cause any problems for you? For instance, one thing I'm thinking about is that comics are all about capturing, or creating, a sense of movement. And cadavers just lie there, obviously.

Kubert: Yeah. Cadavers lie there, [and models] in figure drawing class, they stay completely still. At my dad's school, we had figure drawing every week, also, but they showed us how to break the shapes of the figure down so we could go back to our desk and draw it again, rather than have to have something in front of you to be able to draw it. They broke the figure down into shapes, [like ovals] and cylinders, and [taught the basics of figure] proportion, and things like that. And at RIT, it was "draw what you see" rather than really understand all the shapes and things to be able to draw it again later, out of your head.

Sketch: After that, I imagine you started to look for work again. How'd you break in?

Kubert: Well, like I said, I started lettering when I was 12 or 13, and I continued [lettering] — at RIT, I may have done it a little bit, but not that much — all through grammar school and high school. [So] I knew the editors. I got to know them, and I would bring my work up a little at a time and, after I was a real pain in the ass [for a

while], basically they finally said, "Here, start drawing!" My first job came out ... it was actually after I got out of my dad's school.

Sketch: And that was over at DC?

Kubert: Yeah, that was over at DC.

Sketch: How'd you end up doing so much work for Marvel? Was it a case of them going after you?

Kubert: No, not at all! [Laughter.] It's kind of funny. Andy [Kubert, Adam's brother] started picking up work over there, and he started making royalties over there. And I thought, "Oh my god! What are royalties? That's a [real] paycheck. I want that!" [General laughter.]

And that's why I went over there, because they were paying royalties. Not that DC wasn't, but more of Marvel's books were selling better. And I thought, "Gee, that's kind of cool. You're actually making more for the same amount of work!"

Sketch: Do the sensibilities over at Marvel fit you a little better, you think, as far as your own interests and such? I mean, as far as their approach and use of the superhero genre in general, does that fit in with what you're trying to do better?

Kubert: Not really. I mean, I never considered myself like a super-hero artist. Even before Marvel, I really wasn't. My first job over at Marvel was *Spirits of Vengeance*, and that wasn't really — I mean it has Ghost Rider and that — [but] that wasn't really a super-hero book. And then I went over to do *Wolverine*, and that still wasn't like a spandex-type super hero. I guess only recently I've started to be known as a super-hero artist. I don't know if that answers your question or not...

Sketch: Oh, yeah. Because you're talking about doing what's basically a horror book, and then something that's more of an action-adventure series than your typical super hero series, before moving on to straight-ahead super-hero books like the *Ultimate X-Men*.

Kubert: I couldn't get any more super-hero than that, you know! [General laughter.]

Sketch: Has that progression, since it's been relatively gradual, seemed natural to you?

Kubert: Yeah. It seems totally natural. And it was in no way intentional, it's just kind of the way it went. It just seemed very organic, the way it seems to have happened.

Sketch: How do you approach doing the work? Since you're currently working on *Ultimate X-Men*, let's talk about that



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like Howard Mackie's plots, where there was a lot more left open for [my] interpretation — which I also like. I could do what I want. With Mark's stuff I'm a little more restricted, but I approach it with the same idea in mind, where if it has to be changed for clarity's sake then I'm going to do it.

Sketch: Do you read through the whole script before you do any kind of drawing, or do you start doing some small roughs or thumbnails while you're first reading it?

Kubert: If I have the whole script, I'll read through the whole thing. I'll read through it a couple times. Unfortunately, I think the last issue, or this issue that I'm working on right now, is the first one where

I've gotten the whole script at once. It's a better way to work when you have the whole thing [before beginning to draw], but the way Mark Millar writes, I really haven't had a problem with drawing a scene at a time. Which is what he would give me [most of the time].

A lot of the times, I would be starting at the end of the book, [drawing that] first. Which is kind of neat, because towards the end, as I'm working on the last pages of any given issue, the deadline starts to creep [closer]. And as that happens, I have to start taking shortcuts. I'd rather take shortcuts in the middle of the book than the end of the book, where it's obvious I'm moving a little quickly to get it done. Either way, it doesn't matter to me. As long I'm not working on plot pages totally out of context, it doesn't bother me.

Sketch: Do you thumbnail everything out, or just certain scenes?

Kubert: No, I don't thumbnail anything. My "thumbnails" are full size.

I do go through a lot of Marvel paper because I'll draw something, and if it doesn't work, then I'll put it aside. But I find that if I'm thumbnailing, I might get something in the thumbnail where I just can't repeat it. I just can't get that gesture, or that feeling, again. Whereas if I'm thumbnailing it large, you know, roughing it out and getting things down [full size], accidents happen and I just keep it. Sometimes you can't have that accident happen twice, so that's what I do.

Sketch: How finished are your roughs? I ask because some people's roughs are very rough, while other people's roughs are some artists' finished pencils.

Kubert: They're not anywhere near finished, but sometimes I get a little carried away, and I'll go too far just because I feel like it, you know? But my roughs, I still see them as roughs. I don't really see what other people are doing, so I don't know how finished my roughs are [when compared to theirs].

Sketch: Do you go from one kind of pencil to another in this process, or do you stick with one throughout the whole roughing out?

Kubert: I have a whole army of pencils. [Laughter] When I'm roughing pages out, I have a really thick pencil. I actually use a sandpaper pad to get a real fat, blunt end; that kind of forces me to keep it loose, because with a thick pencil you can't really get into the detail of the drawing. [It's] kind of my own way of handicapping myself into keeping it rough and not getting into too much detail. And when I start tight-

ening it up, I start using smaller pencils, like smaller, thinner leads.

Sketch: Do you start erasing at that point, to get rid of the original thicker lines, or do you kind of feather them out, smudge them out or something similar to make them part of the whole look?

Kubert: Actually, what I do is when I'm roughing out a page, that's the part for me that's real messy. I just go everywhere with it. Because I know with the under drawing, and I'll rough in lighting, that's where all the thinking [happens] in the rough stage. And then what I do is, I have this ... I just call it a sock. I don't even know the name [of it]. I think they might call it a "tampon" or something. It's this small cylinder thing with eraser things in it. I don't even know what's inside it.

Sketch: Oh, yeah. I believe it's called an architect's eraser, or something like that. It almost looks like a small bean bag, right?

Kubert: Yeah, like a bean bag kind of thing or something. And, after I'm done roughing out the whole page, I'll go over the whole page [with it] and it lightens up my pencils. [Also,] it takes out all the smudges, and all the hand marks and finger marks. [After I'm done doing that general erasing,] All that I'm left with is a light version of my roughs, and that's what I go back into. Eventually, as I'm working on it, you can't even see that anymore. But what I do, before I lighten it up, I'll take a Xerox of it. A nice, dark Xerox [because,] sometimes I'll lighten it up too much or, as I work on it, I'll lose what my original intention was, so I can always refer back to that Xerox.

And I know my dad doesn't go through any of this! [General laughter] "Just do it!" He inks his own stuff, so his pencils are practically nonexistent. I'm penciling so at least some of me shows through, and the inker doesn't have to guess very much, so he wonders why it takes me so long to pencil. It's because I'm penciling it for an inker; I'm not penciling it for myself.

Sketch: If you had a choice, would you ink your own stuff?

Kubert: You know, it's funny [that you ask because] Andy and I have this conversation all the time. He's dying to ink his own stuff. For me, I want to ink just my covers; that would keep me happy. To ink the interiors? Once I pencil it, I want to be done with it. I want to move on. I guess I get bored with it a little bit. I don't want to draw it twice. Maybe if I started penciling real loose, and then inking over [my own] loose pencils, it would be different. But I haven't really done much of that. So I



guess I'm the weird Kubert; I don't know if I really want to ink a whole book of interiors. I've done it, but it takes a really long time and I'd rather just keep drawing, keep moving.

Sketch: Do you prefer a human inker, or do you like the new process that Marvel's been using where it's all done on the computer?

Kubert: You mean computer coloring? I haven't really seen any computer inking that's been anything to speak of.

The computer coloring, I mean it's really just a different technique. I really miss inking my own covers. I haven't done that in a while. But either way [is fine with me]. I mean, it's always who I'm working with [that] actually brings the illustration up a level. Because there are times where a computer artist might fall short. That goes the same for inkers, too. But that's what I wouldn't like.

One other thing is, when it's computer colored over pencils, it's hard for me to see me in the drawing anymore. And that's not something that I'm all that happy with.

Sketch: Yeah, that's something I've noticed, too. The analogy that keeps springing to my mind is music recording; sometimes a digital recording feels cold.

Kubert: There are certain techniques where it does look cold. I think if it's completely airbrushed it's very cold. But I think if some of the pencils show through, I think it's a lot less cold.

I mean the argument might also be given [you the same effect when] someone just paints over your pencils, just uses your drawing as an under drawing and painting over it. I've been painted over by Simon Bisley, I've been painted over by the Hildebrandt brothers. My dad has inked over me, and I'm completely gone after he inks over me. [General laughter] But I love what Simon did, although you can't tell I drew it. I love what the Hildebrands did, and I don't think you see me there anymore. I'm into experimenting. I like seeing how people interpret my work. And if they were to paint over it or whatever — whether it's with a computer, or oils, or acrylics or watercolors — I love seeing how other people would interpret my drawing.

Sketch: Well, speaking of experiments, you just tried doing something really interesting in a recent issue of *Ultimate X-Men*, #10, didn't you?

Kubert: Yeah.

Sketch: What brought that experiment about, and what were you trying to accomplish?

Kubert: I was looking to do



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something...There was a total of five or six panels of this mutant in a tank, like a fish tank type of thing. And I was trying to figure out something different to do with it, and I was thumbing through this Moebius book that I had and I saw this technique that he used where he was drawing, it looked like pastel pencils to me, on top of a black paper. And it gave it a really cool, like a see through look. And I decided to give it a shot, to see if I could do that same kind of thing. Although what I did pales in comparison to what Moebius did, but I think what I did worked. In relation to the way the rest of the panel was rendered, it really stuck out, and it looked a little bit different. And I get bored easy, so I got to do differ-

ent things. I just can't do the same thing over and over.

Sketch: Have you tried any other new techniques on the books recently?

Kubert: Yeah. As a matter of fact, issue #11, the first nine pages are all flash back. And I hate doing flash backs, normally. I either play with it in pencil, or I do something different. I did this one flash back in *Uncanny X-Men* where I actually drew on cardboard, and I picked up the highlights with white, and I went in with ink, and I did all this stuff. Just because it was fun. I like doing it

But in this issue in particular, there were nine pages of flash back, and it's actually



Wolverine meeting Nick Fury for the first time [during] Desert Storm, 9 or 11 years ago, however long ago it was. As a matter of fact, I read the plot on the plane to [the] Wizard World [convention] in Chicago, and the first thing that came to my mind was to have it inked by my dad. And that's what we're doing; the first 9 pages are all going to be inked by him over me.

Sketch: Talk about that classic war look!

Kubert: Yeah, that's exactly it. What better way to render Desert Storm in *Ultimate X-Men*? It's a really, really cool sequence. It's very cinematic. You don't

even see Wolverine until, I guess it's the fifth or sixth page. You only see bits and pieces of him in shadow, or in the smoke. It is really cool. It is just really cool, and I decided in just the first two or three pages that my dad has inks, and it is really, really cool.

Also, we have a new colorist on this book starting with this issue. His name's Dave Stewart, and he's colored a bunch of stuff. Just lately, he's done *Fray* over at Dark Horse, Joss Whedon's new book. And this guy's just super talented, and this is like his first — I don't think it's his first Marvel book, he's done a couple things — but I think it's his first pretty big thing.

Sketch: On your finished page, your figures are pretty detailed; how about your backgrounds?

Kubert: My backgrounds are pretty detailed, too. Art Thibert will put in what I put in. I don't think he'll be putting in knobs and bells and whistles in the background, so I think what you see is pretty much what was in the pencils.

Sketch: What kind of paper do you like working on? I know that lately you've been using Marvel's paper.

Kubert: Yeah, I use Marvel board. Sometimes you get a bad batch, but I just start penciling on it. It's not smooth; it has a small tooth to it. But if I get a bad batch of paper, I find [that] if I use a different pencil it works fine. We've had bad batches where the inker has complained [that] it comes up on his pens a little bit. But I really haven't had any problem with different papers.

Sketch: Does it not matter to you too much what the tooth is on it?

Kubert: Well, I like a little bit of tooth. If it's too smooth, then the pencil doesn't really adhere that well to it. I like a little bit of tooth, and I'm not really worried about smearing the pencils, or smearing it too bad. I mean, eventually it's just going to get erased, anyway. I try to be neat, and keep it clean for the inker so he can understand what I want, but I don't wear white gloves or [put] paper under my hand, or anything.

Sketch: So you're not hitting it with fixative every two minutes or anything. [General laughter.]

Kubert: No.

Sketch: Do you have any favorite pencils that you use?

Kubert: [Laughing] I've never been asked that [before], but as a matter of fact I have a favorite pencil. I have this pencil that I found when I was going through my dad's school. It's a mechanical pencil and I've been using it for 20 years. And that's the one that I [use the most]. I think if I lost it, I don't think I could draw anymore. So it's like my good luck pencil, it's been through everything. [General laughter.] But it's a mechanical pencil, and the red's rubbed off. It's almost all metal now, you know? But, yeah, that's my favorite pencil.

Sketch: So it wasn't necessarily the grip that was on it originally, or anything like that that made you like it?

Kubert: No, no. I think my finger marks are worn in, so it's more comfortable now.

[General laughter.]

Sketch: What's your typical workday like?

Kubert: Well, I get up early. I'm usually sitting at my [studio's] desk by 7:30. I go through my emails, which could take [a lot of] time, but I try to keep it to half an hour. And I usually work from 8 until 5:30 or so. Then I come home, see my family. I bring my work home, sometimes. If I have some time, I have a studio at home where I'll go up and draw some. And I usually end up working six days a week, which kind of sucks, but, you know, that's the way it is now.

Sketch: Was that always your schedule, or did that change after you got married and had kids?

Kubert: Before I got married, I would sleep later. [Laughter] I wouldn't get up as early, but I'd be working late. I think I got this from my dad, where I can just keep working. I can do all-nighters without any problem at all. My wife doesn't like it. But, in fact, I kind of like it myself, doing an all-nighter every now and then. To me, it just feels kind of good. And, like I said, my wife hates it. There's something about when you're working and the sun starts coming up, and you're getting a lot done. It's just kind of cool.

Sketch: About how many pages a day do you get done?

Kubert: I try to get one done a day. Sometimes, I don't get one done. There's a lot of distractions. You know, the phone, and family, and things, and sometimes that page ends up taking more than a day.

Sketch: How do you handle going to conventions with your deadlines? Do you just try to get ahead beforehand, and then try to make up for lost time when you get back?

Kubert: I crank before I go, and I crank when I get back. Getting ahead is really tough for me, actually. I mean, I'm on a monthly book, but I've never done 12 issues in a year.

Sketch: Well, you do end up doing a couple shows a year, it seems.

Kubert: Yeah. I go to [Wizard World] Chicago. I've gone there for the past, I guess, five years now. And I might go to a small local convention during the year. So, like maybe one or two conventions a year.

Sketch: How about covers? How long do those take you to do?

Kubert: That takes me a day. Covers go pretty quick for me. They don't usually

take me that long. If I'm inking it, it'll take me a day and a half.

Sketch: How do you come up with the cover designs? Is it a case where it just seems obvious, or is it a bit of work?

Kubert: Well, covers really aren't that difficult for me. On *Ultimate X-Men* covers, they're a cinch, because basically they're one character covers. And I approach it different ways, depending on the book and the subject. When I was on *Wolverine*, I would take the most dramatic part of the story and illustrate that. There are times where I would just start out with a doodle, and turn it into a cover. I've done that before. So it really depends. I approach it differently [depending upon the circumstances]. Marvel asks for a cover sketch before you go to pencils, and I usually end up doing that.

Sketch: You said you like to ink your own covers, right?

Kubert: Yeah.

Sketch: What do you use to ink those?

Kubert: I use a brush and pen, mostly. I'll outline the whole thing with a fairly stiff pen. I don't even know the name of it. It's like a fountain pen. It's very stiff, so it's not flexible at all.

So, I'll outline the whole thing. Then I'll put in all my solid blacks, and I'll feather out of the black and add the gray after that. I can only see where I'm going after I have all the blacks in. Then I can see what it is that I have to do.

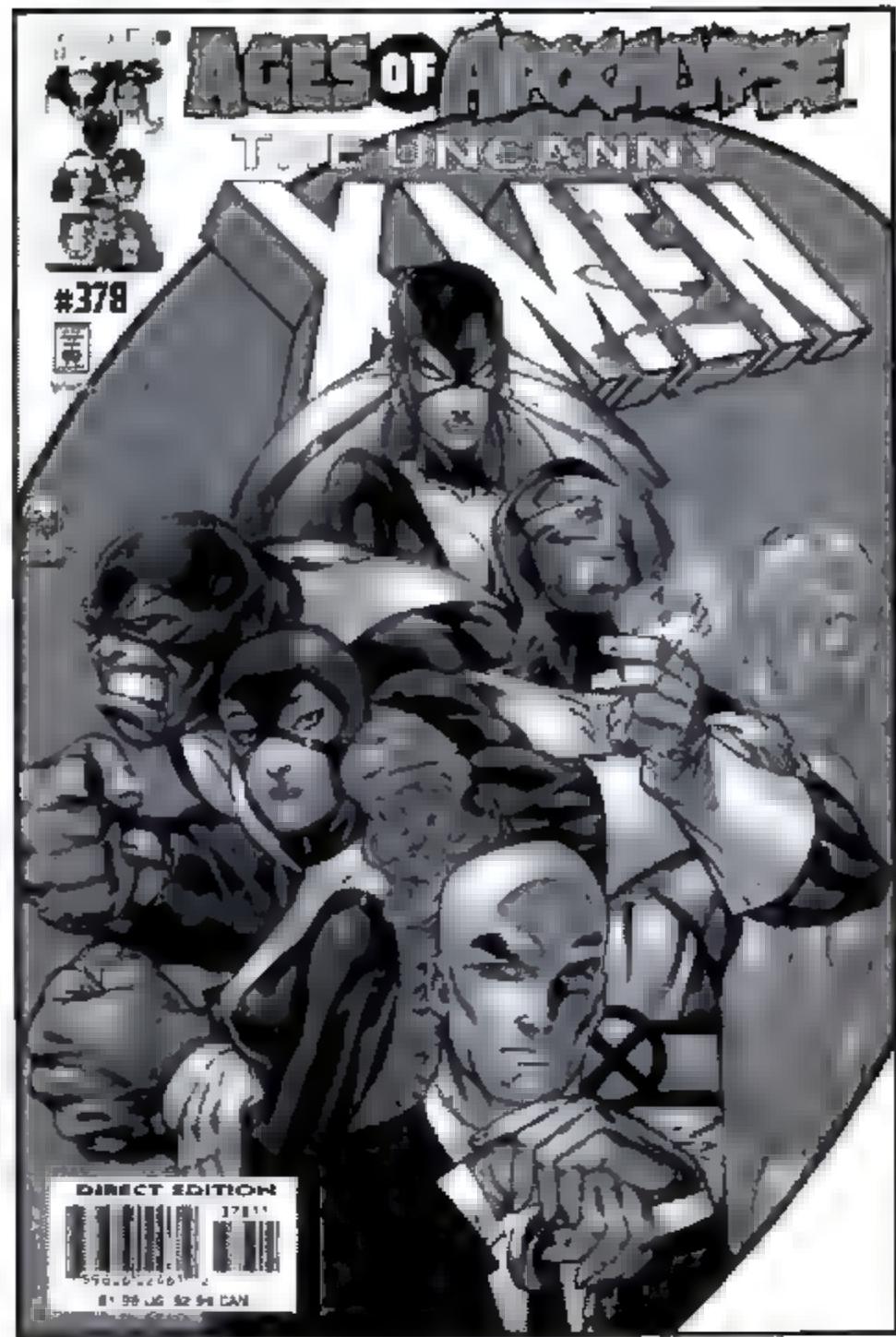
Actually, that's pretty much how I pencil. I'll put in all the solid blacks, and then I'll sit back and see what else needs to be done. Because I find if I start rendering everything, the panel and page will lose its focus. I won't know where I'm heading. As opposed to, if I put the blacks in first, I know where the focus of each panel, and page, should be by the amount of contrast that I'm using.

Sketch: What do you use to lay in the heavy blacks and contrasts after you do the outlining when inking covers?

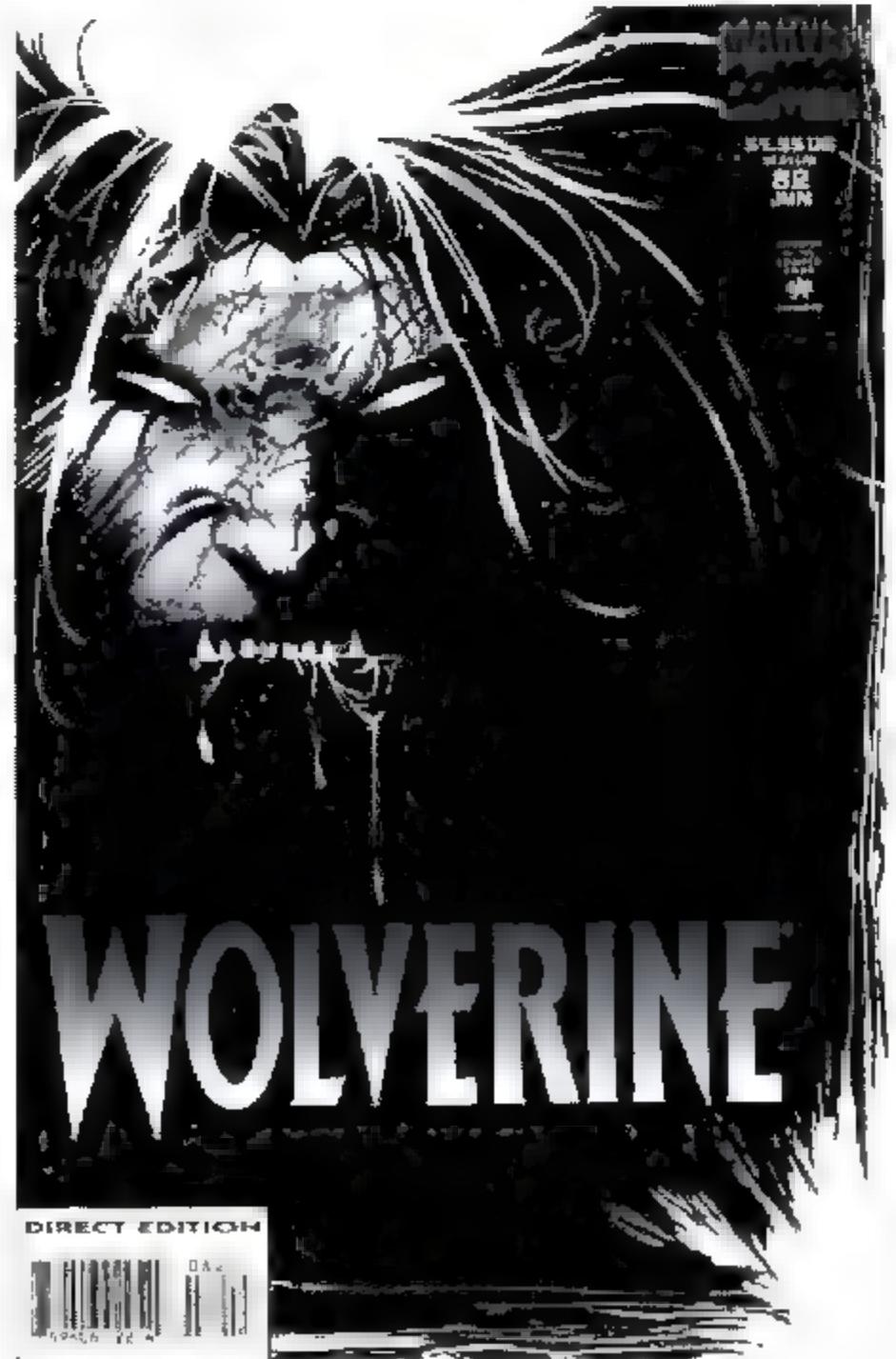
Kubert: I always use ink applied with a Raphael sable brush because it's easier for me and I think it looks better. I use a #2 or #3, depending on the size of the area I have to fill in. I'm afraid that any marker I use will fade with time.

Sketch: Has the design of the page, and the flow of the narrative from panel to panel, become second nature to you, or do you find that you need to stop and think about that a bit every now and then?

Kubert: I've been all over the page as



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everything was going to fall into that design. And after that exercise, I found I concentrated more on what was going on inside the panel rather than the panel [size and shape] itself, and I found that the story was easier to read, and easier to follow. And I continued that approach even after that "Flash Back" crossover [ended].

Working on *Ultimate X-Men*, Mark Millar basically writes in four-panel pages, and it's a natural thing just to stack the four panels one on top of another. When I first started drawing *Ultimate X-Men*, I didn't want to do that. I fought it because I didn't want the book to look like *The Authority*. And it would be so easy to have it to look like that. Not that that's a bad thing; I didn't want people to compare it to it, you know what I mean?

Sketch: *Oh, yeah, especially with Mark just coming off a great run on The Authority.*

Kubert: So my panels were pretty much different shapes and sizes [at first]. And finally I'd just done a few pages in that time where they were just four horizontal panels, and it just seemed to me that it was so easy to read again, getting back to the [kind of] pages that I did on *The Hulk*. Now I'm just doing all the pages [as] four horizontal panels, and it just seems, again, I'm concentrating more on what's happening inside of the panel, rather than the shape of the panel itself. And it just seems very, very easy to read, and that's what I'm into now.

Sketch: *It's really interesting how a simple discipline like that, something that seems so arbitrary and extraneous, can help you focus on the storytelling.*

Kubert: Oh yeah. Yeah, it's kind of neat. Some of the things I'm focusing on right now are leading your eye through the page, with composition, and action, and contrast and things like that. I've done that a lot all through the books I've drawn, but

here, for some reason, it's something that I find interesting and I try to do it. I'm consciously trying to do it.

In fact, this is kind of funny. [Laughter] I was going over a couple of the pages with my dad that he's going to be inking, and after we were through I was trying to explain to him, "Yeah, I was trying to lead your eye through the page." And I pointed to this side of the panel, this panel, this panel, and I said, "See how I've lead your eye through the page?" And he said, "That's funny. I read it this way!" And he went — just kidding around, busting my chops — he says, "I read it this way!" [Loud general laughter] That was kind of funny.

Sketch: *A bit like the student explaining something to his master*

Kubert: Yeah. We always [do that]. I mean, I tell him exactly what I think of his stuff, and he tells me exactly what he thinks of mine. It's a great relationship. Andy and I have the same kind of relationship. Kind of love/hate brotherly [dynamics].

Sketch: *Is there much competition between you guys?*

Kubert: [Laughter] It's a friendly competition, [but,] yeah, absolutely. I mean I'll always bust him, because on *Ultimate X-Men*, we were supposed to do two issues on, two issues off. Until they asked him to do *Origin*. Which was great, I don't blame him for going off and taking it. It was a great job, and a great opportunity. But then he asked Richard [Isanove, the colorist on *Ultimate X-Men*], and Richard went off and did [*Origin* too]. So I always bust him for stealing my colorist, you know? But he'll be back, he'll be back.

Sketch: *Do you feel like you've firmly established your self, your own style, and claimed your own spot in the sun so to speak, or are you still working towards that?*

Kubert: You know, I don't think I've

ever consciously tried to work for that. I've been told that I've come into my own, but I haven't thought about it. I mean, that's not a goal or a focus of mine. I just, pretty much, I'm [just] doing it. I'm just doing [it] in what seems the right way to do it.

Sketch: *Are you happy with where you are right now, and with *Ultimate X-Men* in general?*

Kubert: Yeah. I would have to say that, on *Ultimate X-Men*, I'm probably having the best time I've ever had in comics. It seems to me that everything is right about it. The writing is the best I think I've ever worked on, consistently. The quality of reproduction, and the paper that it's printed on, are the best. Distribution is the best. It's not a dream project, but it's a project that everyday I look forward to diving back in and drawing.

Sketch: *What would be your dream project?*

Kubert: My dream project, probably, would be to do my own character at some point, and to be able to reach as many people as *Ultimate X-Men* does with my characters, someday.

Sketch: *Is that something you'd like to handle the writing chores on, as well as drawing it?*

Kubert: I don't know. I mean, I know my limits. I don't know if I'm much of a writer. I think I could come up with a plot or two, but dialoguing and things like that, I'm not sure. Maybe I could. Maybe I'm just scared, you know? [General laughter] I don't want to fall flat on my face, but maybe that's the only way to find out if I could do it or not.

I think that's my goal. My goal is to eventually do my own comic, my own set of characters, and see what happens.



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Sketch: Andy, I don't want to assume this, but it seems that an aptitude for art runs in the family. Did you start drawing at an early age, or was that something that developed later?

Andy Kubert: Well, I did your regular amount of drawing when I was a kid. I took a commercial art class when I was a senior in high school, and there was an annex off of the high school called the Morris County Vo-Tech. It wasn't really an annex right off, it was a separate building and a separate class. There I had a teacher named Frank Neubauer, and they taught you basically illustration for ads and things like that. That was an addendum to your regular curriculum in high school, and that's basically when I started getting into art ... when I was a senior.

I went to college for packaging design, and that didn't work out. I only went for about six months. And after that, I went to my dad's school. Initially, I was going to go through my dad's school for about a year, and then work in the offices, work with the administration and things like that. But I really got into the comics, and I really got into the drawing. And I stuck with the school for the three years, and this is where I am right now.

Sketch: So you didn't really have any interest in going into comics before that?

Kubert: Nope. None at all. I didn't start getting into comics until I was about 19, 20 years old.

Sketch: Was it because you wanted to discover your own path, or?

Kubert: I don't know. You know, comics were always around in my house, because of my father. So I used to read them all the time, whenever he brought them home. We mostly had DC comics. But I guess I just took them for granted. At that time, it wasn't anything I wanted to pursue. I enjoyed [reading] the comics, but following it as a career, as an art form, you know, it just never really registered with me to do that.

What's Bred in the Bone, pt. 2

The Origin of Andy Kubert's Art

by Bill Baker

Sketch: What titles did you enjoy back then? Any specific books that you remember reading?

Kubert: Oh, yeah. I loved all the war books. I loved Sgt. Rock. Loved my dad's Tarzan stuff. I know I sound partial to my dad's work, but that's what I read. Denny O'Neil and Neal Adam's [*Green Lantern*/] *Green Arrow* and the Batman stuff, which I loved. And I can remember reading Superman a lot, Jerry Lewis — those comics — and *Sugar and Spike*. [Laughter] That's just [the books,] off the top of my head that I remember really reading. And *Enemy Ace*, too.

Sketch: What were some of the things about those books and characters that you liked?

Kubert: I don't know. I think it was just the stories, and the storytelling. It wasn't any particular artwork, or anything like that. I just remember when I read the things, really getting totally engrossed in them, especially my father's Tarzans, and just enjoying them. As far as art styles or anything like that, it didn't have any kind of connection with wanting to be a cartoonist, [so] I don't think that had any kind of say in which books I picked up or read. I think it was whatever appealed to me at that time, and whatever I could follow, and stories I liked, and that kind of thing.

Sketch: What about the design work appealed to you?

Kubert: You mean the Vo-Tech [classes]?

Sketch: Yeah.

Kubert: It was mostly rendering photographs, and the teacher we had hammered home how to use tools like crow quills, and pen and ink and brushes, and we used to do all kinds of exercises before we actually did the drawings. Maybe just using those different tools, I don't know, [that] got me into it.

Sketch: Well, when you went to college, what did you learn there?

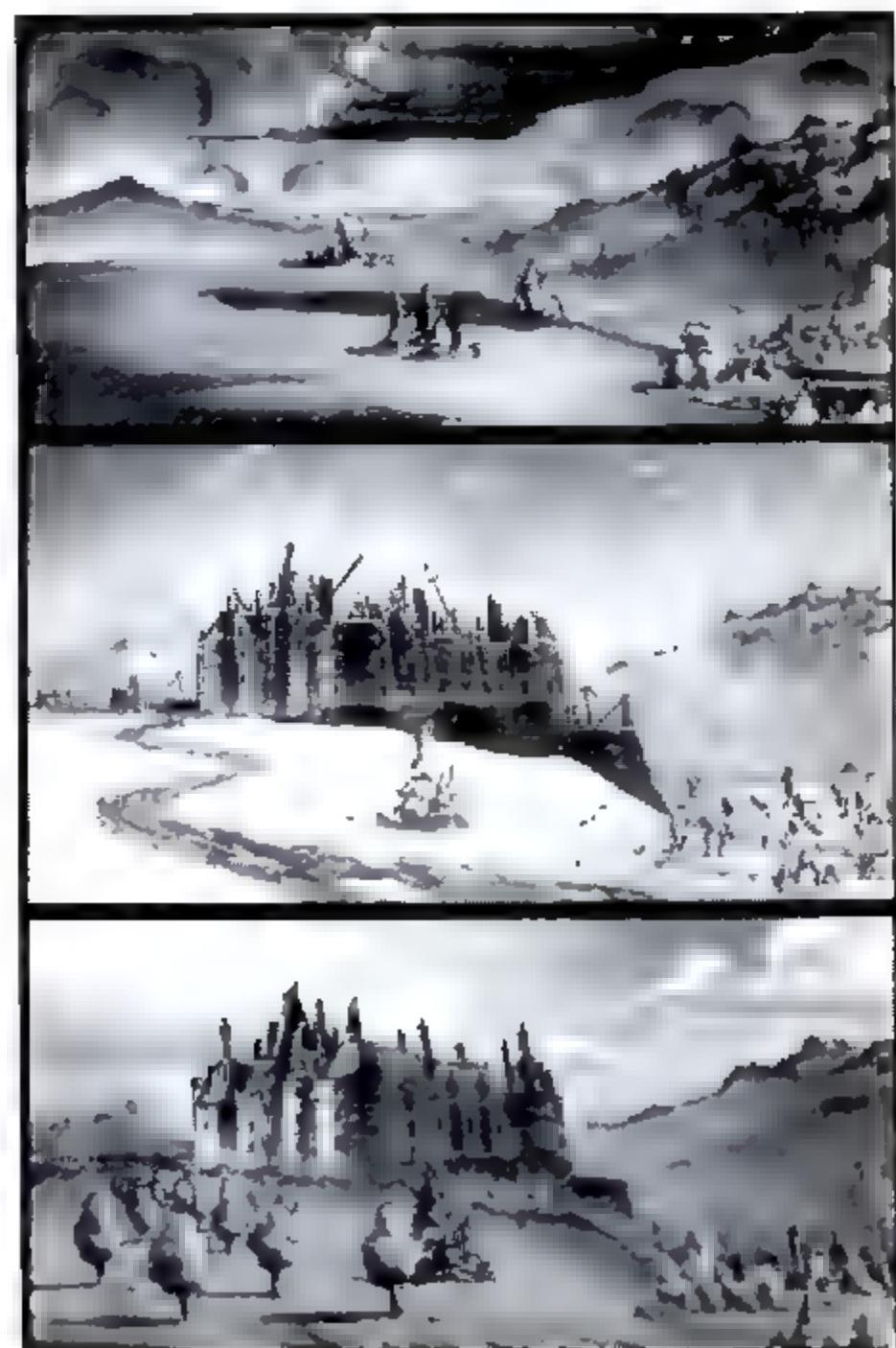
Kubert: Well, I didn't last too long at college because my major was just something that I discovered I wasn't into.

Sketch: Right.

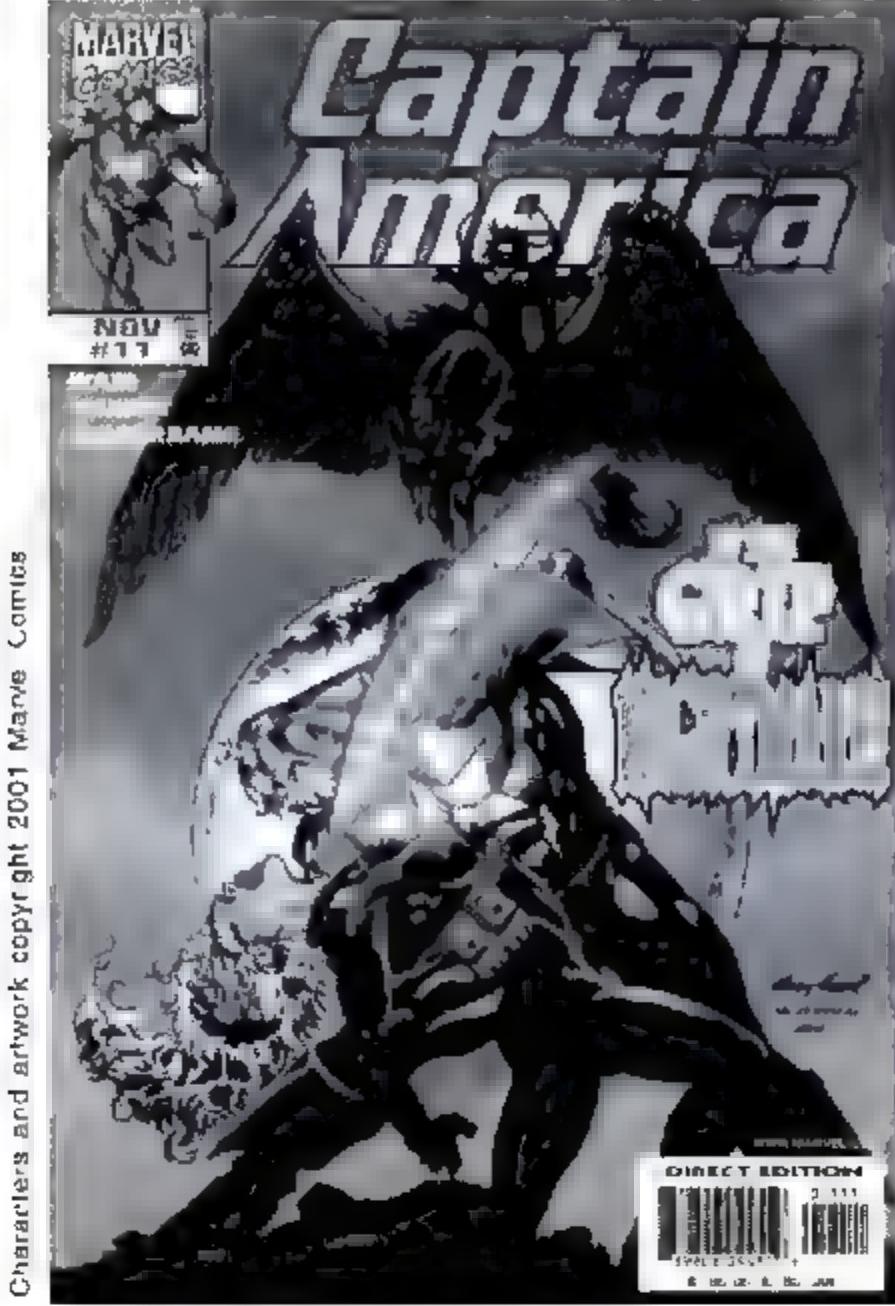
Kubert: I went for packaging design, and I didn't like the courses. It's not to say it was a bad course or anything, it just didn't appeal to me. I went there at the same time as Adam. When I started out as a freshman, Adam was a senior at the same college, Rochester Institute of Technology. The course just wasn't appealing to me at all. And I figured, just to save a lot of money, because the place wasn't cheap, that I would just come back [home]. So, as far as learning anything up there, I didn't. [General laughter.]

Sketch: You learned it wasn't for you.

Kubert: I learned it wasn't for me, right. [More laughter] It was fun, though. I had a good time. I lived on campus; I had a really good time.



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Sketch: You said that, originally, you were just going to your dad's school for a year?

Kubert: Right.

Sketch: So what happened there, what suddenly made drawing comics click for you?

Kubert: I don't know. Maybe it was the environment, going to school with all these kids that were totally into comics — and just being around them. They would say, "Here, check this out, read this!" And I started really, really getting into the stuff. At that time I remember getting into Frank Miller's *Daredevil* stuff. I don't remember the exact year when it was coming out, but it was around that time that I started finding out about Marvel Comics and that kind of thing. I just really got into the storytelling aspect, and trying to figure out the figure drawing. Just trying to get better at it. It was just like doing puzzles, and putting

pieces of a puzzle together.

Maybe it was a competition thing with my brother, also, because Adam went through my dad's school too. We were in the same class, and Adam drew a lot more than I did [while] growing up, so I would see what he was doing and what he was doing was good, and what I was doing was just starting out [to learn to draw]. So maybe it was just that kind of drive to get better. I don't know, it just all clicked for me at that point.

[Also, around that time,] I got into Bernie Wrightson's work, I really liked his work. And then I started going back and looking at his comic work, and I bought all his books that were out at that time. My dad would show me examples of his influences, one of which was *Prince Valiant*. He would have books on Hal Foster's work with Prince Valiant in it, and that stuff just totally blew me away! I would just look at it, and I was [thinking], "Oh, god, that's just absolutely gorgeous!" He would show me Alex Raymond's *Flash Gordon* work — another thing that just like totally blew me away — and that really got me into it.

Plus, my dad was always very encouraging. No matter how terrible my work looked, my dad was always very encouraging and helpful.

Sketch: So it sounds like it just all started coming together at the same time: Influences, an interest in the whole illustrative approach and in the storytelling aspects of comics.

Kubert: Yeah. It just looked like a lot of fun. And it was.

We were talking about influences before [the interview began, when I mentioned that] one of my earliest influences, too, is Hal Foster ... because I just love that work, and it just looked like so much fun to do. I think it was at that time that I said, "All right, I think I could get into doing this!" [General laughter.]

Sketch: So, after you finished up at your dad's school, what did you do then?

Kubert: Well, right before I started [at] my father's school — I think in, what year was that? ... It was 1981 — that summer, before I started school, my dad taught me how to letter. Now, I didn't learn lettering in three months, but he taught me the basics of how to do it. During the three years I went through his school I would practice my lettering as I was doing the assignments and, eventually, I got to be good enough where I could apply for jobs. So, after I had graduated from my father's school, I was already doing, somewhat professional comic book lettering. A little bit here and a little bit there. And that got my foot into the door to show my portfolio to editors.

Sketch: Was that at DC?

Kubert: I've got to think back now ... I did a couple things with my dad while I was in school that eventually got published, and one of my first things, I think, was for Marvel. I was a couple months out of school and Larry Hama, who was [then the] editor on the *Conan* magazines, gave me a couple of pin ups to do. And then, eventually, he gave me a back up story, and that turned into one or two issues of *Savage Sword of Conan*. That's how it started. Larry Hama gave me my first job up at Marvel.

Sketch: And you just worked up from there?

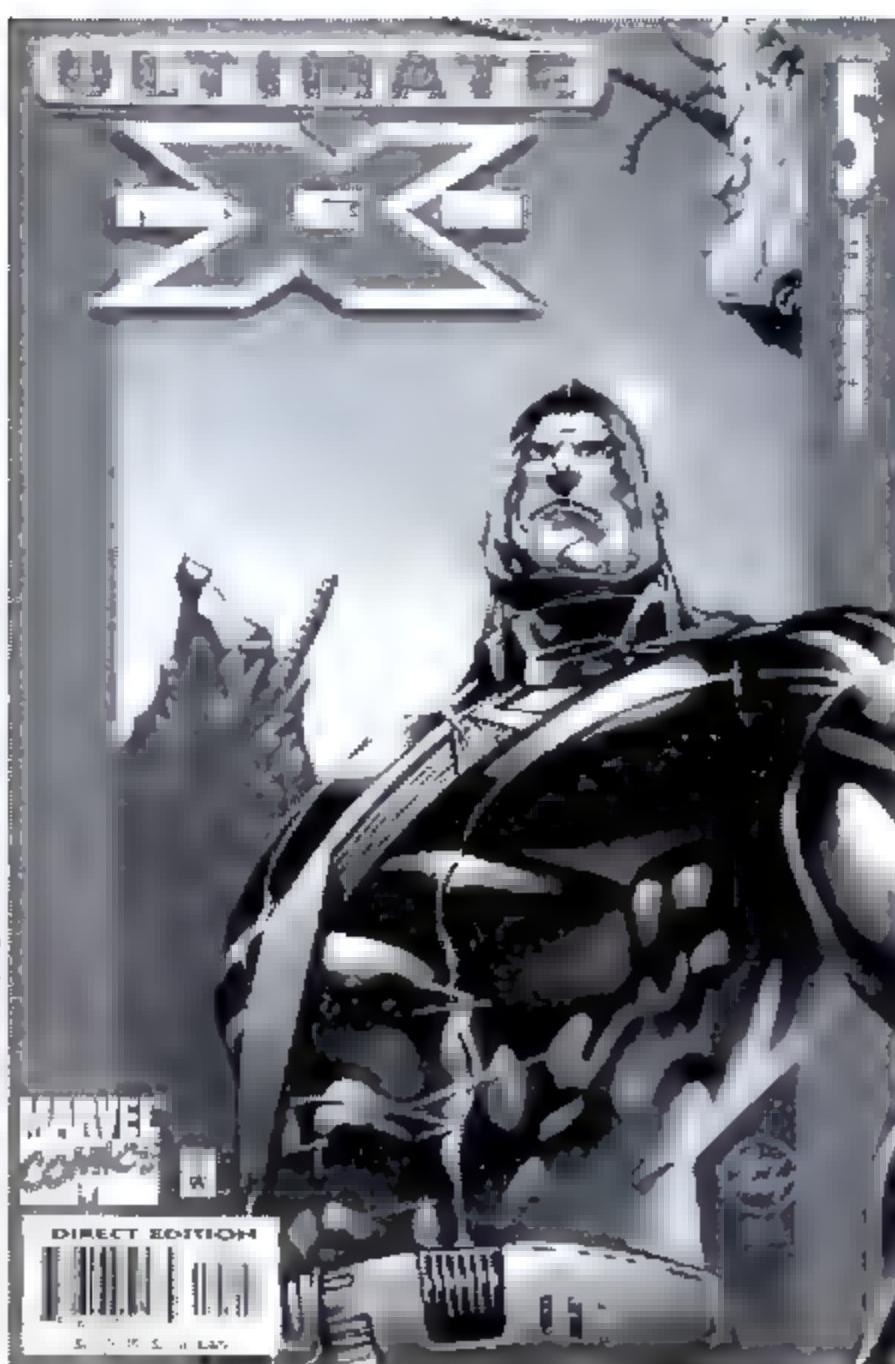
Kubert: Basically, yes. One thing lead into another. It's hard for me to remember the exact order [of assignments]. Back then I used to go back and forth between Marvel and DC — for no particular reason, just whenever jobs came up or whatever characters that I wanted to do more — until, finally, I landed at Marvel on *X-Men*, and I've been there ever since.

Sketch: What is it about those particular characters that seems to suit you? I ask that because you really do seem to excel at doing them.

Kubert: I don't know. [General laughter.] [Maybe, in a roundabout way, it's because] I was always a Kevin Nowlan fan, too. Kevin Nowlan's work I always loved, but he produced so infrequently. Then I saw this book, *Punisher War Journal*, come out. I forgot what year it came out, I think it was 1989 or 1990. And there was a guy doing it by the name of Jim Lee and, to me, it looked sort of like Kevin Nowlan's work. It looked very influenced by Kevin Nowlan's stuff. And I was like, "Wow, here's a guy that's this good, and he can produce on a monthly basis!" I went out and I used to buy those books because I used to enjoy the hell out of them. I thought they were great. And, eventually, I guess Jim got to be a big influence on me, through that [roundabout] way. And then he started drawing *Uncanny X-Men*, and I used to go out and buy those, too, because I just loved what he was doing. And, eventually, that had a big influence on my *X-Men* stuff, too. Anyways, on my early *X-Men* work.

Sketch: How do you approach doing the work itself? Do you have a preference between full script and the Marvel style plot outline?

Kubert: To me it doesn't matter. Either/or. I'll put the same amount of thought and energy into the work [either way]. If the writer wants to write a plot, that's fine; I'll go through it and I'll pace it out the way I feel it's supposed to be paced out. If it's a



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full script, I'll do the same thing. On *Origin*, Paul [Jenkins] is writing a very tight, full script. His pacing is great. This guy is a phenomenal storyteller, and I'm sticking very, very close to what he does. But, really, I have no preference. It doesn't matter to me.

Sketch: Do you read through the script completely before doing any drawing, even a thumbnail, or do you do some rough thumbnails while reading and inspiration hits?

Kubert: I'll definitely read through the script first, through the whole script. Most of the time, I'll talk with the writers beforehand, to see what they're going to type up. Just to get a basic sense of what's going on, or what they're going to be doing. Then I'll get the script and I'll read that through. If I have any questions I'll call the writer up and we'll just go back and forth on it.

When I start the book, especially on the first couple of pages — and usually right on the scripts — I'll just do real small, little thumbnail sketches. From there, I'll go to the full size board with very loose gestures. I call it "blobbing things out," [basically] drawing circles where figures would go, and things like that, just to get a sense of the design of the page and where I'm going with it. And I'll generally do that for the first four or five pages, just to get a feel for the story and the way I want to lay things out.

Sketch: Do those get changed much?

Kubert: All the time! [Laughter] Usually, it's just a first thought. Then I'll think it through to myself and say, "OK, how can I make that better?" or "Can I switch that angle?" or, for storytelling purposes, "Should I do this, should I do that?" Yeah, I'm always drawing and erasing, all the time. I go through a lot of erasers. Especially on the layout stage, because that, to me, is the most important part in the storytelling.

Sketch: What kind of tools do you typically use, and what kind of points do they have on them?

Kubert: When I do the roughs on the boards, I'll use a very hard lead. It's a Venus pencil, it's actually one I've had for a couple years, and the lead is so hard it's like steel. I can't tell you what number it is, because the number wore off. [Laughter] But it's probably like one of the hardest ones [available]. I keep the point very blunt, very flat. And when I'm figuring my layout on the page, I'm just sketching out what I call the blobs — just the areas, like, if there's going to be a figure in the foreground, I'll work it out that way. If there's going to be a figure in the background, I'll



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work it out that way, too. And as I work my way up, as I start to tighten those up — start sketching in arms and legs, just very, very loosely I'll blob those in — I'll use a little bit softer pencil [with] an HB. But that also will be a blunt edge, too. And I'll tighten it up with that. I have a couple of different stages that I use to get to the point of finished [pencils]

Sketch: And you're erasing in between these stages?

Kubert: Oh, yeah, all the time. I'll put an arm up here, see if it works that way. And if it doesn't work that way, I'll try it a different way. I keep working and reworking until I get it to the point where I'm satisfied with it.

Sketch: Is this all in a fairly light pencil?

Kubert: Yeah. Before I go to the detail, before I tighten it up to a linear, tight outline, it's all loose. I'll just block in arms and legs, and I'll just put little dots where the eyes go, just so I know where I'm headed with it.

Sketch: Right, just so you can tell if they're coming or going and such.

Kubert: Right, exactly. And, usually, if I show it to you or to somebody [else], they can tell what's going on with it. It's that tight. You could compare it to ... Have you ever seen John Buscema's [rough layouts], what they used to call "shakedowns"? He used to do layouts on a 10 by 15 piece of paper.

Sketch: Oh, right, where he'd lay out the whole issue in miniature.



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Kubert: Right. He used to do the whole thing through that way, and tighten it up on the board from the light box. What his shakedowns look like are pretty close to my "blob" layouts, although his were a lot tighter, and better drawn, than my loose gestures. [General laughter.]

Sketch: So, when you finally have the layout and the positions of the figures set, that's when you go to the really fine and detailed work?

Kubert: Right. What I do then — and this is not on *Origin*, [because] *Origin* I'm approaching totally different — this is on the other work I've done I would take a kneaded eraser, and I would just lighten those lines up a lot. I just rub the kneaded eraser over the whole panel that I'm working on at that time, and I would take a

point 3 mechanical pencil with a 2H lead in it, and I would just go around and work on what I call a linear, tight breakdown. Everything is there except the rendering. There's no shading, no lights or darks, or anything like that. It's just everything is linearly put in. All the eyes are in there, the fingers, all that kind of stuff. There's just aren't any blacks, nothing is shaded in. And I'll probably go through, not just one page like that, but I'll probably go through about five to even ten pages like that, before I'll go back and start spotting in the blacks and doing the rendering.

Sketch: As far as the blacks and such, when you're inking yourself, do you put the blacks in there with pencil before you ink?

Kubert: OK, there's a process that my brother showed me; he doesn't use it any

more, but I still use it. What I'll do [is, after I] have the tight linear breakdown, I'll reduce it down. I put it on a Xerox machine and I'll reduce it down 64% to comic book size. You have this cheap, little copy, and from there I'll just take the side of a soft pencil and I'll spot all my blacks for contrast. It takes me maybe about 15 minutes to go through the whole page. I do it that way because, A) I can see the whole page easier at that size, and, B) I'm more willing to take chances with it, because if I go right to the original board and I start shading stuff in and I don't like it, then I have to erase everything, and then I have to redraw it all. This way, either I can just erase stuff off the Xerox, or I'll just toss it and make another Xerox. But I get a better sense of the design with spotting the blacks that way.

Sketch: That makes a lot of sense.

Kubert: It works out well. I've been doing it for years that way. It's just a lot of guys don't have access to copy machines, but I was able to pick one up really cheap years ago.

Sketch: How detailed are you getting with your backgrounds?

Kubert: All the backgrounds are in there, too. Everything is there. All the fixtures, textures, everything. And I'll draw through everything, too. Even if I make it a solid black, unless I know for sure in my head that it's going to be black, I'll draw right through it. And then later on I'll just black it in. But everything's there.

Sketch: Right, it's not an empty background with these beautifully rendered figures just floating there.

Kubert: There's a lot of times where I'll know people are in a dark room or something, and it'd be a waste of time if I start drawing in tables and lamps and stuff like that, when I know it's going to be a black. But if I'm not too sure, if it's the inside of an office building or something like that where I'm not exactly sure of the light source, I'll draw everything out. Especially to try to get the perspective right, I'll draw everything out in it.

Sketch: Do you have a preference for the kind of paper you use, and how much tooth it's got? I know these days you've been using Marvel-supplied paper.

Kubert: On the regular boards, I don't like it real smooth. Marvel's [paper], it's called Strathmore plate, but it's not a real slick surface. I like it with a little bit of tooth on it. Especially if I'm inking it, I like it with a little bit of grab, maybe because I like to hear the pen "scratches" across the paper. [Laughter] But the real slick stuff I don't care for.

Sketch: Is it because the ink doesn't adhere quite as well, and the pencils, too, don't stick as well?

Kubert: Yeah, but it's hard to pencil. The pencil goes all over the place, no matter what.

Sketch: You kind of need that friction, then.

Kubert: Yes. Yes, you do. Because, otherwise, you're all over with it, and it's hard to get a definitive line going.

Sketch: How are you drawing *Origin*?

Kubert: I'm actually drawing *Origin* on copy paper.

Sketch: Seriously?

Kubert: Yes.

Sketch: Is your approach essentially the same, otherwise?

Kubert: The way I'm doing *Origin* is, I'm laying it out, I'm roughing it out, on Marvel board. I'm doing it that way because the two-ply Strathmore is very durable, and I can draw and erase on it, draw and erase on it. Then, when I'm satisfied with just the rough layout on it, I'll put that on the Xerox machine and I'll make a full size copy of that board. Then I work through a light box onto another piece of 11 by 17 copy paper, and I'll do that same linear breakdown that I talked about before. Now, the difference between *Origin* and the stuff that I have done before is that it's getting colored right from my pencils. And the copy paper for me — it's Hammermill copy plus — it takes the pencils great. And I get such a good depth with the pencils that I'm using that I couldn't get on the regular Strathmore stuff. [So] that's why I'm using the copying paper ... it takes the pencils fantastically. Whatever you put down is there, and looks really good.

Sketch: It's probably a 20-pound weight, right?

Kubert: I've got the package right here. Twenty size 50 pound, it says.

Sketch: OK. So that's how you're getting that almost 3-D effect with your pencils, then.

Kubert: Right. It's just the copy paper works great for me with that stuff.

Sketch: So you're turning those sheets in, and they shoot right from them?

Kubert: Well, actually, I'm scanning everything in. I scan it in, and all I do is I send them a disc. Actually, copies I send off to Marvel for approval, but I send the colorist the disc, and he puts it in his computer and

colors it up.

Sketch: Well, in general — we'll get back to *Origin* in a second, because it's a different case — would you prefer to ink yourself, or does it not matter to you as long as the person understands what you're doing and going for?

Kubert: There are some great inkers I've worked with, really. Some phenomenal, phenomenal guys. Danny Miki, Jesse Delperdang is great. My dad, [Laughter] who just blew me away on the stuff. But I really want to get back into inking my own work. Not because those [folks], or any of the other guys, are bad or anything like that, [but because] it's more of me [when I ink it]; it's more of what I want in it.

For me, to ink my own work, you could say it's my vision, and more of me. I feel that when I don't ink my own work — and I haven't in years, just because I can't keep it on a regular schedule doing a monthly book — when I don't ink it, it's not all me. It's not what I intended. Whether it be good or bad, what the inkers are doing, it's not mine anymore, really.

Sketch: Right. Because even with the most transparent and sensitive of inkers, they're still covering up your work, and your intentions, to some degree.

Kubert: Exactly. When I ink my own stuff I do a lot of drawing in the inking, things that the guys just won't do because they're not me. They're not thinking the way I'm thinking. That's not putting them down, it's just normal.

Sketch: Right, they'd almost have to literally be inside your head to fully understand what you intend.

Kubert: Exactly. And to pencil things that tight for an inker, it's really rough to do. It's almost nearly impossible, the way I draw. Maybe there are different styles where you can get to that point, where whatever the penciler intends, it doesn't really matter who inks it. But with the way I draw — because I'm a little on the "organicy" side, I feel — they just interpret things differently. That's all.

Sketch: What kind of tools do you use when you're inking? You mentioned the crow quill?

Kubert: Yeah, I use a crow quill. I use a 512 ballpoint. A 513 EF ballpoint. A 102, I think that's the crow quill. And there's like one or two others. I also use an 8402 #2 Raphael brush.

Sketch: Would that be for large areas of blacks, mostly?

Kubert: That'd be for blacks, that'd be



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for rendering different textures — leather, hair, different things like that — or whatever else comes up.

Sketch: What kind of tooth do you like for inking purposes? Do you want some more tooth for that?

Kubert: A little bit. Not too much, because then, when you're using that crow quill, it grabs the paper and you get a big chunk of paper in the end of your crow quill. No, I like something with a little bit of tooth in it. I think [a lot of tooth] on paper, that's like inking on paper towels, you know? It's pretty nasty. [Laughter] And paper that's really hard, it's like drawing on a sidewalk, that's not fun, either. [General laughter.]

It's hard coming across good paper. Sometimes there's Marvel paper that I can't really use, because they get all different kinds of batches. It's not them. It's where they're getting the paper from. The paper gets milled differently, and goes through the rollers differently. If I can't use what they have, I'll go buy my own. I mean, [sometimes] the paper could have the same serial number, the same brand, but just be different. You could get one batch that's totally different from the other.

Sketch: Right, because it could just have a slightly different pulp mix, or even have gone through some new rollers that are being broken in. Things like that'll change the paper completely.

Kubert: Right.

Sketch: When you were lettering, did you basically use the crow quill, as well?



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Kubert: No. What I used was a B6, and then a FB6 speedball point. And for thicker letters, I used an FB5. But then I switched to using rapidographs, so I didn't have to dip them in [ink] all the time. Honestly, I forget which rapidographs I had. [Laughter] I haven't lettered in so long.

Sketch: Well, you've had a few other things occupying your time.

Kubert: Yes. [General laughter.]

Sketch: How do you feel about computer coloring? I'm not trying to put you on the spot here, or cast aspersions on the particular guys you've been working now or in the past, but sometimes the results strike me as a

bit cold, a little artificial. How do you feel about the process in general?

Kubert: Honesty, I like the computer coloring. I think it all depends on who's working the computer at the time. Whatever effect you're getting, it just depends on the individual that's doing the coloring to me.

As far as the guy who's doing *Origin*, Richard Isanove, I love what he's doing. I think it's a phenomenal collaboration between what I'm doing and what he's doing. He's not using 100% computer. He's doing things by hand, he's scanning his paints into the computer, he's working it over in Photoshop. This guy is a very accomplished painter himself. To get to where we're at on the *Origin* book, it was a lot of give and take — for me to come up with, I guess, basically a style or a technique that I thought would work with what Richard wanted to do. [It was a lot of experimenting], scanning in the pencils and sending it out to Richard; Richard coloring it up, sending it back, and just going back and forth on things. I was really very, very happy with the way things are working out.

Sketch: You know, your revealing that he's hand coloring some of it along with the computer work explains a lot of the look on the final book. Because I was looking at the first issue and saying to myself, "OK, how'd he do this, because that doesn't look like typical computer coloring."

Kubert: We didn't want you to look at it and say, "Oh, that's computer coloring." We wanted to have a water color type of feel and technique in it, especially for the time period where the book takes place. We wanted a Victorian feel for it. And, honestly, I think we accomplished it. I was very happy with the way the book printed.

Sketch: Right, because there's always that consideration, too. You can have the best coloring and art in the world, and then it hits the presses and ...

Kubert: Yes, I know! [General laughter] Sometimes, most comic books don't run on all cylinders.

Sketch: And that's certainly one of the most frustrating things about this art form. It's often not until a project's been collected that you actually get to see what people really intended you to see. And even then, it can be a bit of a crapshoot.

Kubert: Yes.

Sketch: Do you think that you'll continue using this new style of working, the approach you developed for *Origin*, in the future?

Kubert: If the right project came up for this kind of approach, I would definitely do it again. I love it. It would have to be the

right thing for this particular look, though.

I love drawing this way. I love the subject matter that *Origin* is [centered on], and the time period [when] it takes place. The way I'm doing the pencils on this, they're more tonal than regular [books].

For regular comics, you usually draw for contrast, and for black and white pretty much, with not that many grays involved. For this, it's more of a...

I don't know if you've seen it before, but sometimes before you paint you have to do a gray tonal — this is the way I approach painting — you have to do a gray tonal practice thing before so you know your levels of depth, and where your lighting is and all that. That's along the lines of the way I'm doing the *Origin* stuff, and I love drawing that way. It's coming out well. But, as far as doing this all the time, I would love to get back into pencil and inking a project here, a project there, but I would definitely do this again.

Sketch: So it's more a matter of matching the style of penciling to the project, then?

Kubert: Well, for this one, we especially wanted to come up with something that would be different and, hopefully, something that people haven't seen before. I said, "I'm going to do something different!" and Richard said, "I'm going to do something different!" and we just meshed it together.

Sketch: So what's coming up after *Origin* for you? Are you headed back to switching off as artist on *Ultimate X-Men*?

Kubert: I'm supposed to, yes.

Sketch: Have you enjoyed working on that book?

Kubert: Yes, that's a lot of fun.

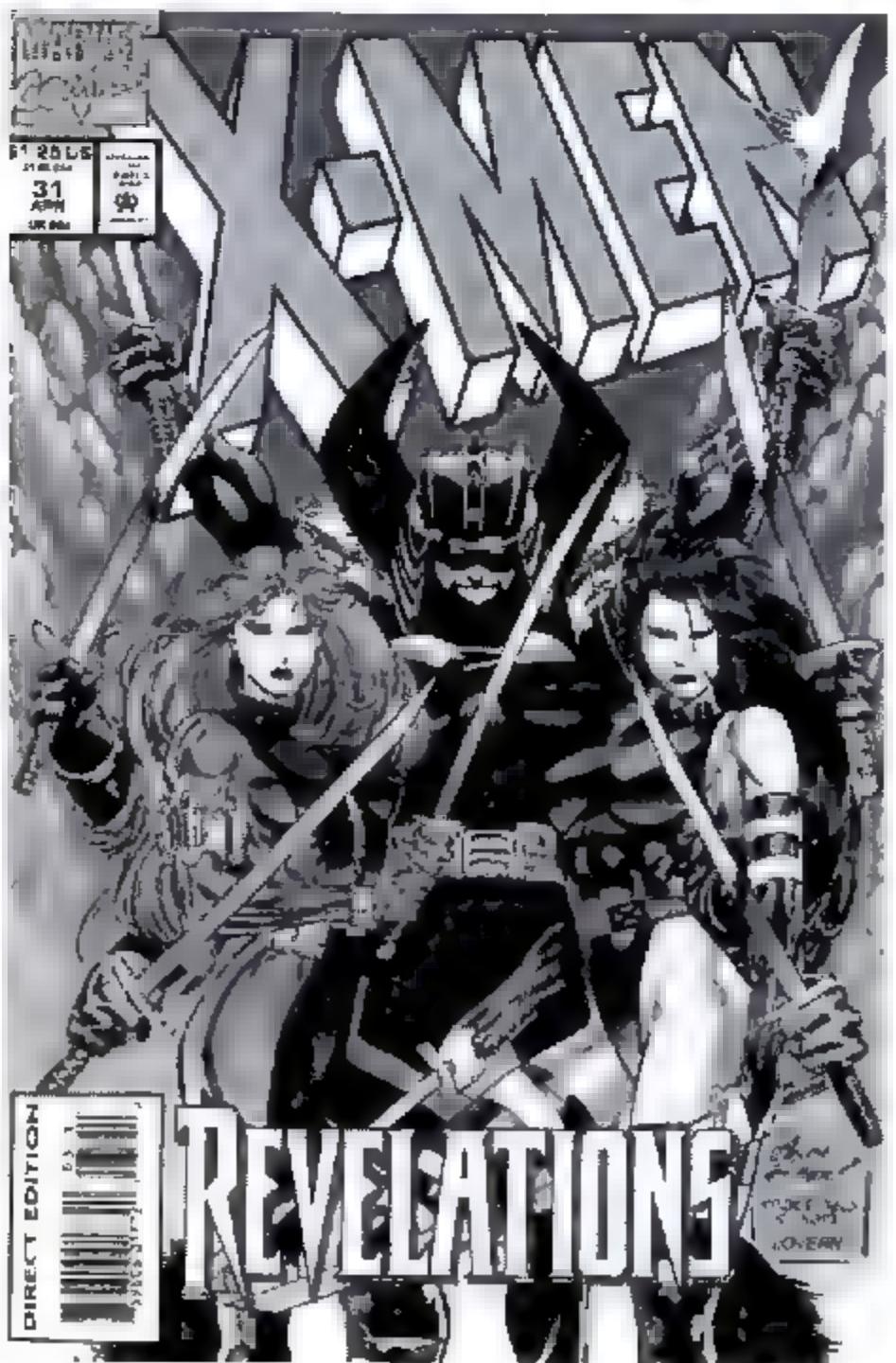
Sketch: I thought so, because it looks like you've been having a blast with that book.

Kubert: Yes, that's a lot of fun. It's a great book. It's a well written book. It's a well produced book. I like it a lot. It's a good read.

Sketch: You talked a bit about working with Paul, what's Mark [Millar, the writer of *Ultimate X-Men*] like? I've heard he's just a wonder to work with.

Kubert: Last December Adam and I went out with Mark, and Frank Quietly, and Joe Quesada, and Brian Bendis, and a couple other folks. Axel Alonso and Stuart Moore [were there, too]. Mark and Frank came over from Scotland, and we just wanted to meet them, and we had a good time. We had a really good time.

When I work with Mark it's through email, mostly, because he's over in Scot-



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land and it would cost a ton of money to talk back and forth on the phone. So whenever I got the scripts it was through email. But it was a pleasure working with him.

Sketch: Is that something that's important to you? Does it help you in your work on the book when you hit it off with somebody, even if it's just via email, or does that not seem to matter at all?

Kubert: It doesn't seem to effect it; not at all, no. I mean, if the work is there, if the script is good, it doesn't matter if I hit it off with the person or not. But I usually do hit it off with the writers, though.

Sketch: Is there anything you've always wanted to do that you haven't had a chance to try yet? Something like a fully painted book?

Kubert: I kind of feel like I'm doing one now! [General laughter] But, as far as painting it myself ... no.

Someday I'd like to do a creator owned thing, [something] where I would do all the writing, the penciling, and the inking. But right now I'm really enjoying what I'm doing. I would love to do another type of series like *Origin*, maybe with different Marvel characters, with the same creative team working on this. We'll see ...

Sketch: Is there any possibility of you doing some DC work again, or are you happy at Marvel, and that's where you'll be for the foreseeable future?

Kubert: Right now, I'm with Marvel. And I've been with Marvel, and exclusive with Marvel for ... Whew, quite a while now. I can't remember how long. [General laughter] But they treat me really well, and, hopefully, I've been treating them really well. It's kind of like a loyalty thing, you know?

Sketch: Oh, yeah.

Kubert: But, someday I'd love to draw Batman. I'd love to do Superman. And I'm sure that someday I will. I look forward to doing that.

Sketch: I was wondering if there were any of the iconic DC characters that you were interested in getting a crack at?

Kubert: Yes. I used to draw Sgt. Rock, years back. I was just trying to figure out what I was doing. I would love to have another crack at that again. Characters like Viking Prince, that kind of character would be great to do. When I was doing Adam Strange, I had a great time with that, but I'd love to have another crack [at that,] too! [Laughter] I wasn't happy with what I did.

Sketch: And that was almost a completely different style for you in a lot of ways.

Kubert: Yes. Well, it all depends on what was influencing me at the time. There, it was my dad ... who is still an influence on me. I go through phases I have been. I think lately, especially since I started on...

Well, the last couple of years on my *X-Men* run, and getting into *Kazar*, I feel that I'm coming more into my own and feeling my way through [to finding my own definitive style]. I don't know, I just think it's working out that way.

Sketch: I'm glad you brought that up, because I was wondering if you feel that you've really started to come into your own and if, despite having Kubert as a last name, it's now more focused on your own work than the last name or any comparisons to your father or brother. In other words, the question of whether or not you feel that you've fully established your own voice and body of work yet?

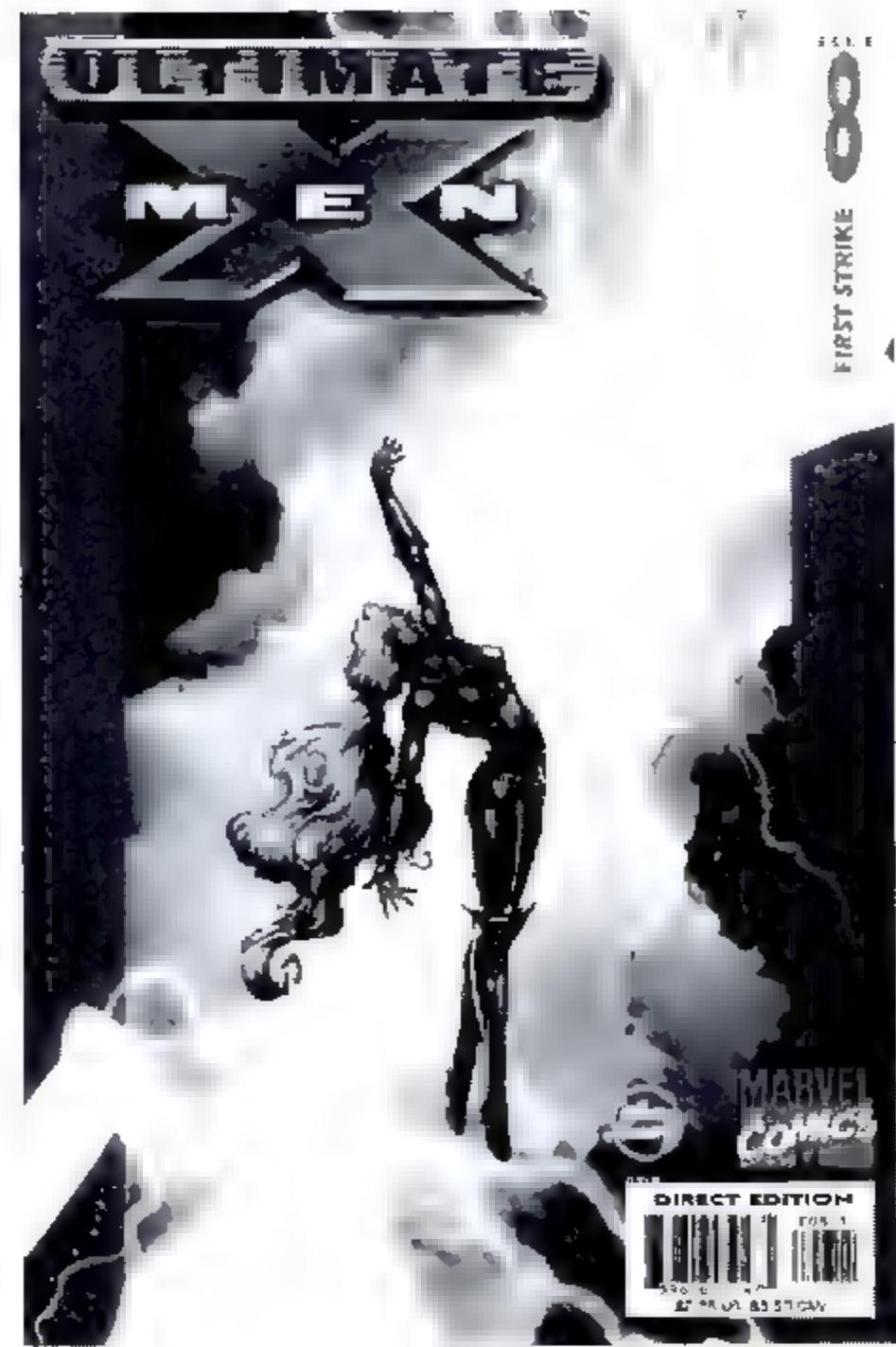
Kubert: I never thought of anything like that. I never thought of it that way. I always thought my dad — if you could see my hand — is up here, and I'm down here. My dad is to me a person, and an artist, that you can't touch, that you can't come anywhere near. I think, personally, he's one of the best living cartoonists around today. And for myself to be compared with him? I guess having the same last name is really the only comparison you could b r i n g .

Sketch: That makes sense, especially in light of the fact that — as you just said before — you really feel like you've just begun to discover your own, true artistic voice in a sense.

Kubert: Yes. I've started working things out. I don't know, I guess it's just from repetition of doing it, and trying things backwards and forwards, and just working things over and over again. Of getting into it, and trying to figure out new and better and more effective ways of doing things. You age fast doing that, too. [General laughter.]

Sketch: Do you have any suggestions for people who want to improve their art? I'm asking because it seems that you're constantly striving, yourself, to better your own work. Is that one of the things you'd say was important, always striving to improve? And is there anything else you'd add to that?

Kubert: Yes. And always accept criticism. That helps me out a lot. Once you think you're the end all and be all of artists, you're not going to get any better. [Also,] look at other artists that you ad-



mire. Study their work — don't swipe it, don't copy it, but try and figure out what you like about their work, what makes you look at their work, what are they doing in it that makes you attracted to it — try to figure that out, and somehow kind of incorporate it into yours to maybe make yours better, or to make yours more attractive to yourself.

When I used to look at Hal Foster's work, I would try to examine what he was doing. [I'd] just sit there and examine it, just look at the stuff, and just sit and figure out why he put this horse here, or why he did this or that, or how he did that. It was difficult to try to figure out, but it helps out a lot, though. It helps out a real lot.

Sketch: About how long does it take for you to do a typical page?

Kubert: If I were to draw, from start to finish, drawing a typical *Captain America* page, [it would take me] probably a little more than a day to finish a page. I could finish it in a long day, but I have set work hours. Having a wife and family, I can't pull all-nighters and things like that. So I usually start working around 8 o'clock in the morning, 7:30 - 8 o'clock, and I'll finish around 5 - 5:30. If I were to work on a page straight through, I'd probably have to put in, maybe, about two more hours on that page the next day, on a typical page. Some pages take longer. It all depends on what's on there. Some pages take less. On *Origin*, it's taking me at least two days a page, sometimes more, sometimes less. But the average is about two days.

Sketch: And that's from start to finish?

Kubert: That would be from start to fin-

ish, yes. If I just started laying one page out, and then going to the linear breakdown, and then going to the finishes on it

Sketch: How about the covers? How long does that take you?

Kubert: Covers; usually you have to do a sketch, they have to get approved by editorial up at Marvel. And sometimes you don't get your first sketch approved, or your second sketch. [General laughter] Sometimes it takes a while to get an idea through. But once that gets approved, it all depends on if I'm just pencilizing it, or pencilizing and inking it. If I'm just pencilizing it, I can usually pencil it in a day and send it out. And that's with the sketch all approved. If I'm inking it, I don't pencil as tight for myself, if I were to ink it. So, if I inked it, it would probably take me maybe a day and a half to do that cover. Again, it all depends on what's on the cover, or how intricate it is. If it's a big head shot, of course, it doesn't take you that long. But if it's a big fight scene, with a whole bunch of figures, it's going to take you a lot longer.

Sketch: Does the design background you have, with packages and such, help you with the covers?

Kubert: No. That doesn't even come into my mind! [General laughter.]

Sketch: Do you find yourself changing mental gears when it comes to doing the covers, as opposed to laying out the pages, or is it all pretty much the same to you?

Kubert: No, you have to change mental gears. Well, first off, you have to leave room for the logo and for the corner box, and you've got to figure out where they're going to put the cover copy on, and stuff like that. And you have to figure out a basic design. Sometimes it comes real quick, and sometimes you have to labor over the thing just to figure it out. But you have to really think in terms of design, in terms of layout, and in terms of your composition — especially — on things like that.

Sketch: I've heard you're going back to teaching?

Kubert: Yes.

Sketch: What are some of the things that you really stress to your students?

Kubert: Everything that I've just talked about now. [General laughter] They're going to be learning the process; the way I pencil, the way I go about the layouts, the way I do the storytelling, the angle shots. These are the same things that I just went over in my class on Monday. And I will tell them about [recognizing their] influences, and trying to figure out — what we had talked about [earlier] — how to make your



work better. That kind of thing. Everything we have just talked about, that's what I would tell them.

Sketch: What do you get from teaching ... aside from a paycheck, of course? [General laughter.]

Kubert: I do a lot of things intuitively. Sometimes it just comes to you without really thinking about it. But, in teaching, when you're talking things out, you're explaining to the kids how you're going about doing things, and then you're thinking to yourself, "Oh, yeah. You can do it this way, or do it that way!" It's actually helping me in my thought process, as to my approach. It's just helping me a lot more on how I see my work. It's very difficult to talk about, to

put in words, but it's just helping me out with my own work, a lot.

I just started on Monday, but I could see, also, the enthusiasm in the kids' faces. And things like that [are rewarding]. Even going over some of their first work, you see that they're very interested. And it's very gratifying to get that, to have that give and take with somebody.

Sketch: do you think that you'll be teaching for a while?

Kubert: Yeah. I'm going to be teaching for a while. I can't say for how long; probably for a long time.



By Beau Smith

Everyday some know-it-all reminds me that we are in the computer age. That the internet is the greatest thing since Mary Hart in a short skirt. That the world wide web is where it all happens.

I hate it when other people are right and I can't take credit for it.

So, I'll suck it up and add to it. Being the shameless self-promoter that I am, I'll admit that I too have walked a bit on the dark side and used the internet for my own selfish purposes and gains. Email press releases, maintaining your own web site and contacting other news web sites about your work in comics and entertainment. It's all there for the taking. All you have to do is make like Conan the Barbarian and take it.

One of the most recent uses that I and other egomaniacs have found of the internet is emailing a newsletter about yourself and the work that you are doing and will do. With technology growing like a fat dog that you've fed too much, you'll be able to have attractive, informative, and entertaining intercourse on an intellectual level with the info-hungry audience that seeks more knowledge on you and your career.

This works both in print and with email.

I'm gonna list a few tips that you might wanna follow to make sure that your newsletter is read, and not routed to the trash or delete button. Through design and content, a newsletter needs to capture the attention of potential readers and keep it. A newsletter won't get any results if nobody reads it.

1. Define your purpose and audience. You already know your product (your comic, you as a creator), so you need to figure out what audience will be most receptive to your work. Your purpose should be to get more people reading

From The Ranch

Read All About Me

about your comic book and your work. You want new readers to jump on your bandwagon and play along. You want editors and acquisition people in entertainment to know of your work and want to hire you.

2. Project the right image. You want a well designed, professional, clear meaning newsletter to convey a positive image about you, your work and your book. It's important to get this across to potential readers, editors, and the media.

3. Be credible. Have short, to-the-point interviews with third party experts, editors, media reps, and leaders in the comic book industry talking about you. This lends credibility to you and your newsletter

4. Publish often. Most newsletters come out on an average of four times a year. Others as frequent as weekly. It all depends on how much work you are doing and how many books you have coming out. Remember, if you are doing this yourself you have to also factor in time. You don't want to spend more time on doing your newsletter than doing your real work. So figure out your timetable, and balance it like a trick seal with a beach ball on his nose. Don't say how often you are going to do it. That way if things really pick up and you want to increase the output, you can do so without having to explain anything. I suggest doing it four times a year starting out. That way if you want, you can always do more.

5. Objectivity. Although a newsletter can be an excellent vehicle for promoting you and your work, it shouldn't read like a sales brochure from a cheap used car lot. By its nature a newsletter should be a "soft" sell, and provide useful info

to readers. A newsletter that reads like sales hype will find itself tossed far and fast like a horseshoe with the wrong end of the horse still attached. Your newsletter stories should be written more objectively, like articles you'd read in a newspaper. Base your articles on factual info, and write them as if you were a neutral third party. Instead of writing a headline that screams "Beau Smith is the greatest selling writer in the world!", try a more factual, third person approach. A better headline would be: "Beau Smith writes some of the best selling comics." Well.... still pulling the truth a bit far, but I couldn't resist writing it. At least I spared you the other thousand times I wrote it for my own evil pleasure.

6. Express...yes. Impress...no. The purpose of a newsletter is to communicate, not see how many times you can send readers to the dictionary. Don't use big words when smaller, clearer ones will do. Keep your writing casual, non-technical, and conversational.

7. Proofread...and then do it again. In life I chose to be pretty and not smart, so I always enlist the aid of a good editor to proofread my ramblings and make me sound smarter than I am. This is a must. You have to have someone else check your work. Nothing looks worse than having your words go out and having them spelled wrong, grammar so mangled that the reader thinks you're an alien, or worse - so many typos that it looks like you were paid to change the keys on the keyboard. Proofreading is tedious and mundane—**BUT IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY!**



8. You can judge a book by the cover. With a newsletter, a good one, you have to lure the reader in with the cover or cover story. It can be the difference between being a jewel or junk mail. Check out the way *USA Today* and *The Wall Street Journal* do their front page. They are the best at drawing readers into their web and taking their 50 or 75 cents.

9. Graphics. Use at least one graphic/artwork/photo per page of your newsletter. Few photos come from a developer with perfect contrast, color, and brightness levels. If you scan photos for your newsletter, be sure to electronically touch them up before you insert them into the layout. Otherwise they may look muddy, and most of that mud will reflect on you and your work. You're dirty enough without the extra help. Most image-editing software programs, such as Adobe Photoshop, allow you to adjust the contrast, color, and brightness levels of a scanned photo. Make sure you check out some of the very helpful articles on Photoshop that appear in back issues of *Sketch Magazine*.

10 List. In each newsletter you should list your past, current, and future works with a timetable. Easy reference to you and your work. It doesn't matter if you are a writer, artist, letterer, colorist...you should always have as many illustrations as you can in your newsletter. Define what you're pushing, and then push it! If you're a writer then you might wanna show a page or two of a script that you've written. That will give editors a quick glance at your talent, and they will quickly learn that they must hire you as soon as possible. Same goes for the rest of you. Show what you can do. The

secret is to not do too little or too much. Know when to push yourself away from the table.

11. Check and recheck. If you use art from one of the publishers you've worked for, make sure you get their permission and all the trademark and copyright info correct. That is a BIG must.

Make sure you have a photo of you, your logo, and your studio symbol (if you have one) in every newsletter.

It doesn't matter if you get super fancy with graphics and designs or if you do a bare minimal approach. Make sure it's clean and readable. Don't get drunk with design and make it a blot of colors that no one can read.

Have your contact info clear and on every page. You can't get jobs, the media, or a babe without it.

Reprint any good reviews and notices that you or your work may get in other publications.

Do not make paragraphs too text heavy. Divide them up. No one likes seeing a block of type that looks like it could crush a truck. Use bullet points whenever possible. They are easy to read, and make strong points like a boxer's left jab.

If you can't afford to print up a newsletter you can do it on your computer and email it out. I would advise having links to your graphics attachments. Nobody likes waiting for unwanted jpgs to download. If you email, you MUST be able to get their attention with that lead-in lure headline.

Most word processing programs have a presentation or newsletter program with them. My Appleworks has one, as did

Claris. You can check many web sites that have newsletter programs that you can download for free or for a small cost. www.google.com or any of the other well-known search engines can find 'em for ya, since I was way too lazy to list 'em here.

Growing up as a kid in the 60's, I remember that in each issue of Marvel Comics they had the Bullpen Bulletins page. There is a great lesson in a newsletter. On one page, they got everything across to the reader that they needed. It was entertaining, informative, and fun. A template to newsletter success.

This short little lesson on self-promoting newsletters should get you started. Think long and hard about what you want on that newsletter. Lay it out in your head and then put it to paper or keyboard. In this weird world of comic books and entertainment you need every little trick you can find. You can either have 'em flippin' the pages of your comic book or have 'em watch you flippin' their burger at Burger King. The choice is yours. Do you want success to go along with that comic book, or fries with that order?

From the ranch,



Beau

Blue Line Pro

WWW.BLUELINEPRO.COM - WWW.BLPCOMICS.COM



**COMIC BOOK
ART BOARDS**

**EXCLUSIVE
ART PAPERS**

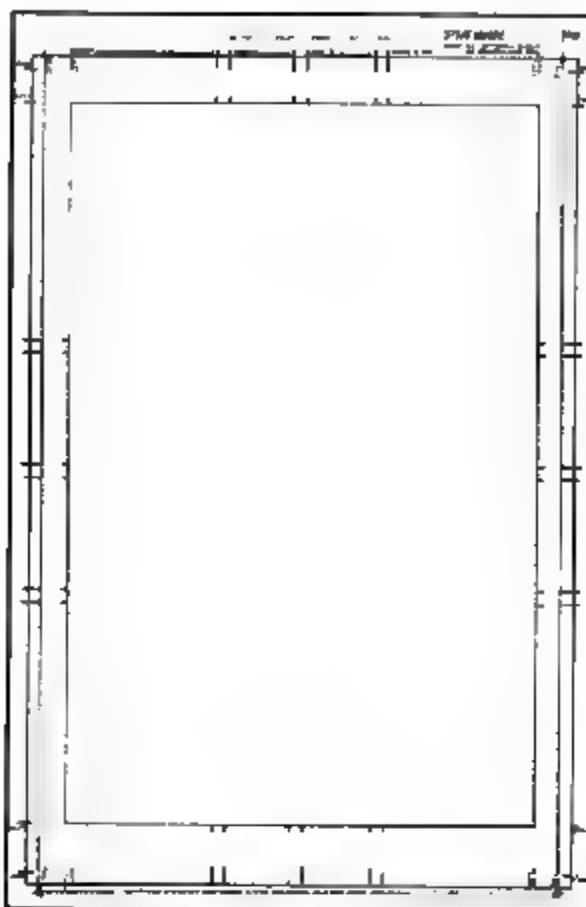
ART BOOKS

FONTS

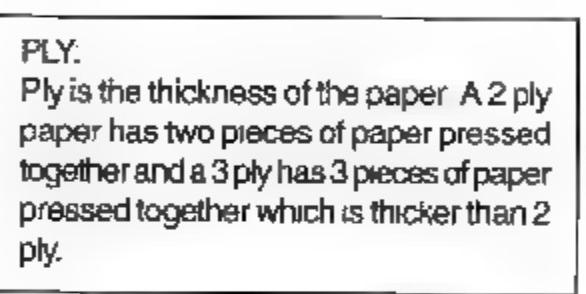
SKETCH MAGAZINE

**ART TOOLS
& SUPPLIES**

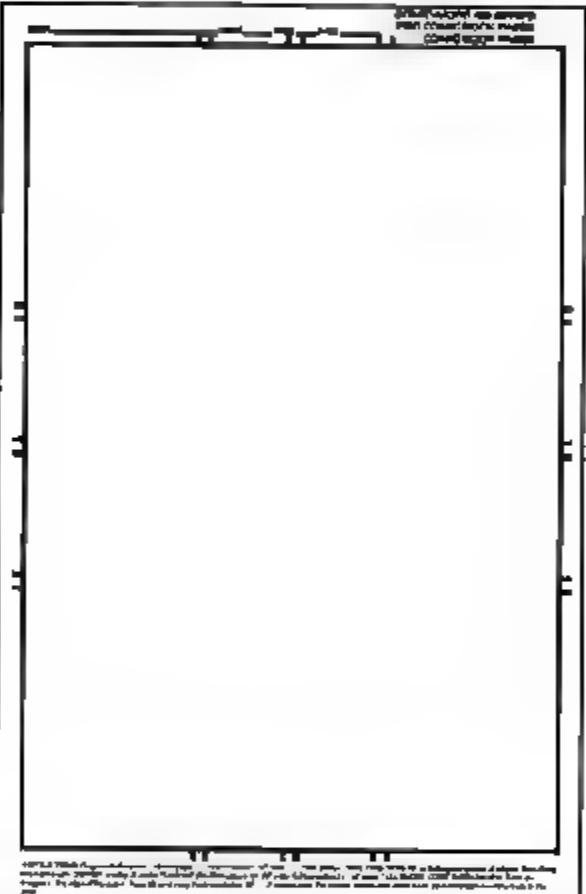
COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS



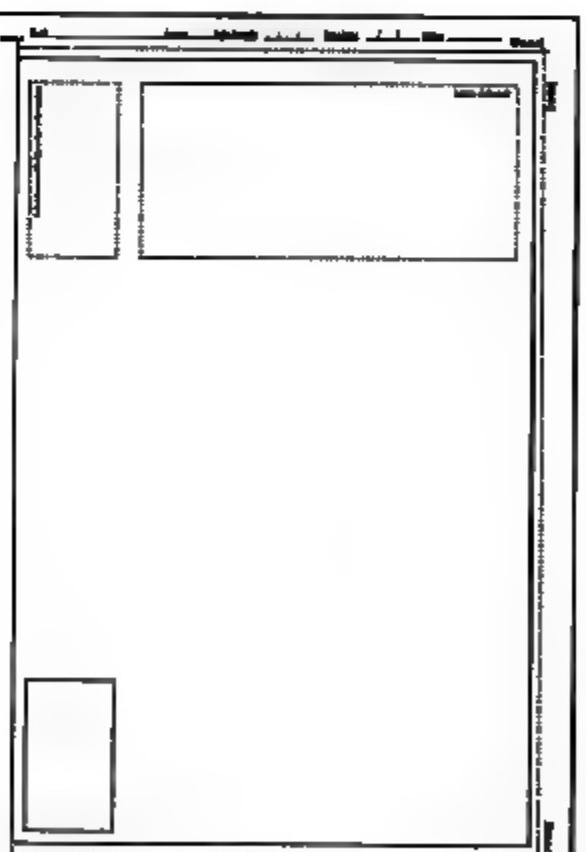
Full Trim Format Art Boards



PLY.
Ply is the thickness of the paper. A 2 ply paper has two pieces of paper pressed together and a 3 ply has 3 pieces of paper pressed together which is thicker than 2 ply.



Traditional Format Art Boards



Cover Sheets

Blue Line now offers comic artist an full trim comic book board to draw your comics. Just recently comic book publishers have been using full trim comic book boards to draw their comics. Blue Line has designed a full trim page that fits most requirements for full bleed comics, but can also be used to draw traditional comic book page formats. Special dotted borders helps the artist to keep the important illustrations within an area to be sure it's not lost to trimming.

PREMIERE300(STRATHMORE)

300 Series Full Trim Format

PRO 300 Series Comic Book Boards is an economical heavyweight paper. Like the rest of the Blue Line products the Pro 300 Series is pre-printed with a non-photo blue border that allows the artist to draw comics the actual size that professionals do.

- **PRO 300 Series (SMOOTH)** surface is a 100 lb. 100% acid free board. This Strathmore board is ideal for pen ink work and is also suited for pencil and marker.

- ITEM# BL1041 SRP \$17.00

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/bagged

- **PRO 300 Series (REGULAR)** toothy surface is a 100lb. 100% acid free board. This Strathmore board works well with pencils, charcoal and watercolor.

- ITEM# BL1042 SRP \$17.00

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/bagged

PREMIERE400(STRATHMORE)

400 Series Full Trim Format

400 Series already has a very serious history. Comic Book Boards 400 series is printed on the finest art paper available, **Strathmore**. Like the rest of the Blue Line products the 400 Series is preprinted with a non-photo blue border that allows the artist to draw comics the actual size that professionals draw.

- **S400 Series (SMOOTH)** surface is a 100% acid free bristol. This Strathmore board is ideal for detailed ink work and is also suited for pencil and marker.

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/bagged

- ITEM# BL1043 SMOOTH 2-PLY SRP \$19.00

- ITEM# BL1045 SMOOTH 3-PLY SRP \$28.00

- **S400 Series (REGULAR)** toothy surface is a 100% acid free bristol. This Strathmore board works well with pencils, inks, charcoal and pastel

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/bagged

- ITEM# BL1044 REGULAR 2-PLY SRP \$19.00

- ITEM# BL1046 REGULAR 3-PLY SRP \$28.00

PREMIERE500(STRATHMORE)

500 Series Full Trim Format

500 series comic book boards is the top of the line for art paper. Strathmore 500 is 100% cotton fiber, Acid free and unsurpassed for fine pen and pencil work.

- **500 Series (SMOOTH)** surface is a 100% cotton fiber acid free board. This Strathmore board is ideal for pen ink work and is also suited for pencil and marker.

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/bagged

- ITEM# BL1047 SMOOTH 2-PLY SRP \$41.00

- ITEM# BL1049 SMOOTH 3-PLY SRP \$57.75

- **500 Series (REGULAR)** toothy surface is a 100% cotton fiber acid free board. This Strathmore board works well with pencils, charcoal and watercolor.

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/bagged

- ITEM# BL1048 REGULAR 2-PLY SRP \$41.00

- ITEM# BL1050 REGULAR 3-PLY SRP \$57.75

PRO COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS *FULL TRIM FORMAT*

Blue Line has taken the quality paper that they have used in the "Pro" pages for years and printed a newly designed Full Trim border format in non-photo blue ink.

This offering the artist the quality of Pro pages with an advanced page border.

In addition, each pack also includes one page of Blue Line Comic Book Cover Sheets, specifically laid out with a larger image area for standard comic book cover designs.

Use pencil, ink (brush recommended), markers, wash, acrylics.

- ITEM# BL1038 SRP \$15.95

24 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 10" x 15" non-photo image/bagged

PRO COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS *TRADITIONAL FORMAT*

Pro Comic Book Boards brite white surface offers a smooth surface to pencils and inking with a brush literally glides across the surface (quill pen not recommended). Pro has offered thousands of artist the opportunity to begin their careers on a pre-printed boards like

the professional publisher uses.

Traditional Format has the original 10" x 15" image border with panel markers for a traditional page layout.

Page size is 11" x 17" with a non-photo blue image area of 10" x 15". In addition, each pack also includes one page of Blue Line Comic Book Cover Sheets, specifically laid out with a larger image area for standard comic book cover designs.

Use pencil, ink (brush recommended), markers, wash, acrylics.

- ITEM# BL1001 SRP \$15.95

24 pages per pack

11" x 17" 3-ply brite art boards with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area and 1 Cover Sheet with 10 3/4" x 16" non-photo border printed/bagged.

COMIC BOOK BOARDS

(Traditional Format)

Comic Book Boards are specifically laid out with an image area for standard comic book designs. These boards like the other comic book boards offer an area to write the name of the book the artist is drawing, issue number, page number and date. This helps to keep track of your boards and where they belong. Double page spreads are a snap for an artist. Just take two comic book boards and then butt the sides together, apply tape down the back of those boards and then the artist is ready to illustrate a double-page drawing. Fast and easy with no cutting. They are 24 pages of Brite Art Index. Page size is 11" x 17" with a non-photo blue image area of 10" x 15".

Use pencil, ink (brush), marker, wash.

- ITEM# BL1003 SRP \$12.95

24 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 10" x 15" non-photo image/bagged

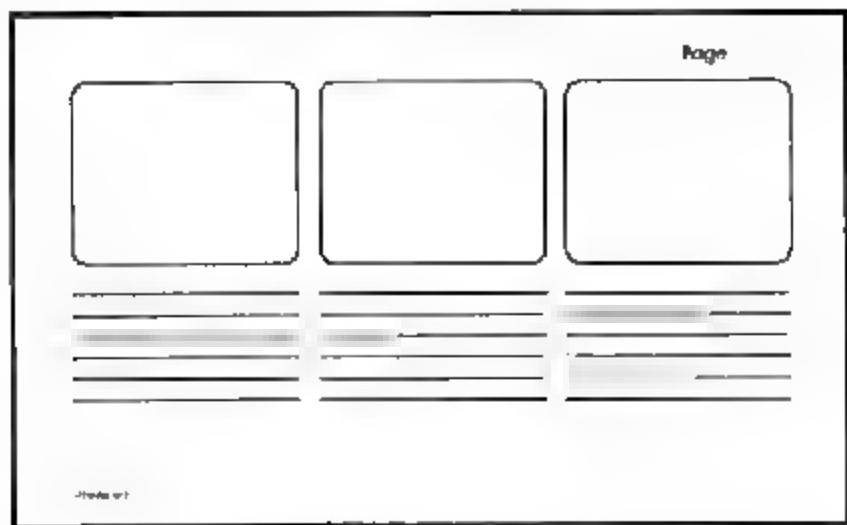
COMIC BOOK COVER SHEETS

These Comic Book Cover Sheets, show a border for your drawing with pre-marked bleeds for trimming with an area for the possible placement for the book's logo and company information clearly marked. This helps to keep all of the important elements of the covers from being covered up when the book logo and company info are placed later. They are 12 pages of 2-ply premium Brite art index board that come bagged and feature non-photo blue ink. Page size is 11" x 17" with an image area of 10 3/4" x 16".

- ITEM# BL1007 SRP \$9.95

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" art pages printed with a 10 3/4" x 16" non-photo blue border printed/bagged.



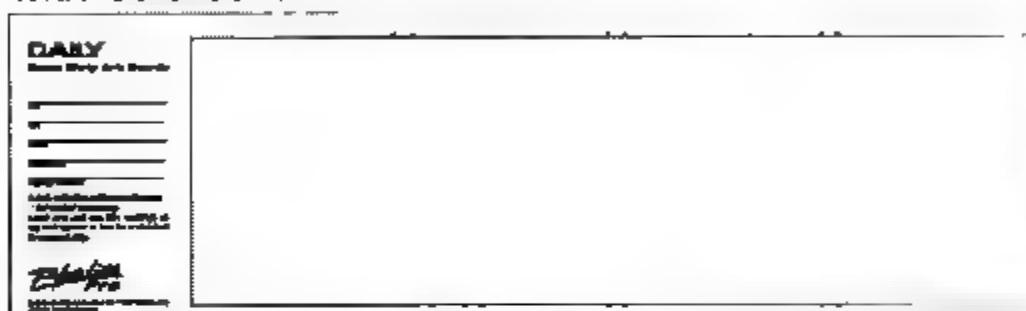
STORYBOARD TEMPLATES

Animators and Storyboard artist! Blue Line Storyboard Templates offers animators and writers a quick and easy way to show movement and sequences of a story or animation.

Storyboard Templates have three large panels with lines below each for detailed art and storytelling.

- ITEM# BL1018 SRP \$13.95

100 sheets of 60 lb. 8 1/2" x 14" pages with 3 panels padded with colored cover.

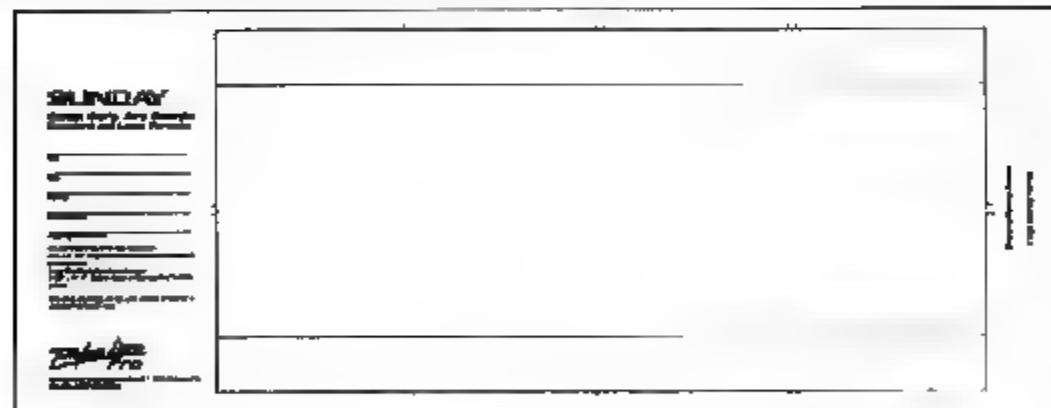


COMIC STRIP ART BOARDS

Blue Line Pro COMIC STRIP ART BOARDS offer comic strip illustrators an easy and time saving way to create professional looking comic strips. Printed on Blue Line Pro's Premiere (Strathmore) 300 series smooth with a non-photo blue border. Daily comic strip borders measure 4 1/16" x 13". This offers the illustrator the ability to reduce the original at a 44% reduction to the standard daily strip size. Sunday comic strip borders have two sizes: the first is a large format of 5 3/8" x 11 1/2" and the second format of 3 3/4" x 11 1/2". The Sunday strips are drawn at the size they are published and usual have two rows of panels. Each strip offers basic border formats for four and three panels and Sundays allow for additional rows.

BLP COMIC STRIP ART BOARDS 12 Daily Comic Strips and 2 Sunday Comic Strips.

- ITEM # BL1052 SRP #12.95



POCKET SKETCH PAD

50 pages of heavy illustration board to carry around in your pocket to have ready when you hit with a revolutionary vision. Great for quick sketches and designs. Featuring Blue Line's quality illustration paper.

Great for pencilling, inking and washes.

50 pages / 5" x 9 1/2" / padded / two-color cover

- Item # BL1051 SRP \$5.95



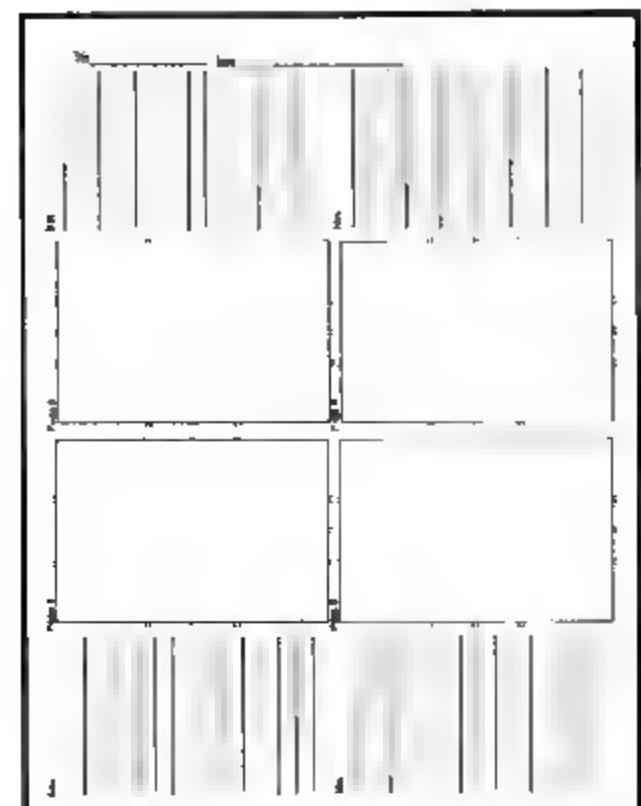
LAYOUT PAGES

Comic Book Layout Pages uses premium bond paper and printed in non-photo blue, of course, features markings to layout four thumbnails per sheet to detail your comic book page ideas and room for notations and other information.

Used for story boarding your comic book story. A great tool for artists or writers to work out details for the story along with layouts of pages.

- ITEM# BL1005 SRP \$8.95

30 8 1/2" x 11" pages printed in non-photo blue/ bagged.



CONCEPT SKETCH PAGES



CONCEPT SKETCH PAGES

Record and organize your creative ideas on a convenient, quality art board. Concept Sketch Pages are made from premium index board featuring non-photo blue ink so that the artist can ink his illustrations on a non-repro surface. Concept Sketch Pages offer an image area for an illustrator to draw a character scene or anything. And, it also gives room for written information to be included with the artwork. This is handy when a character is designed for a comic book and you want to include his bio, powers, etc., or a Role Playing character you're playing.

These pages can easily be hole punched and inserted into a binder. A character template is even included for quick and easy character creations!

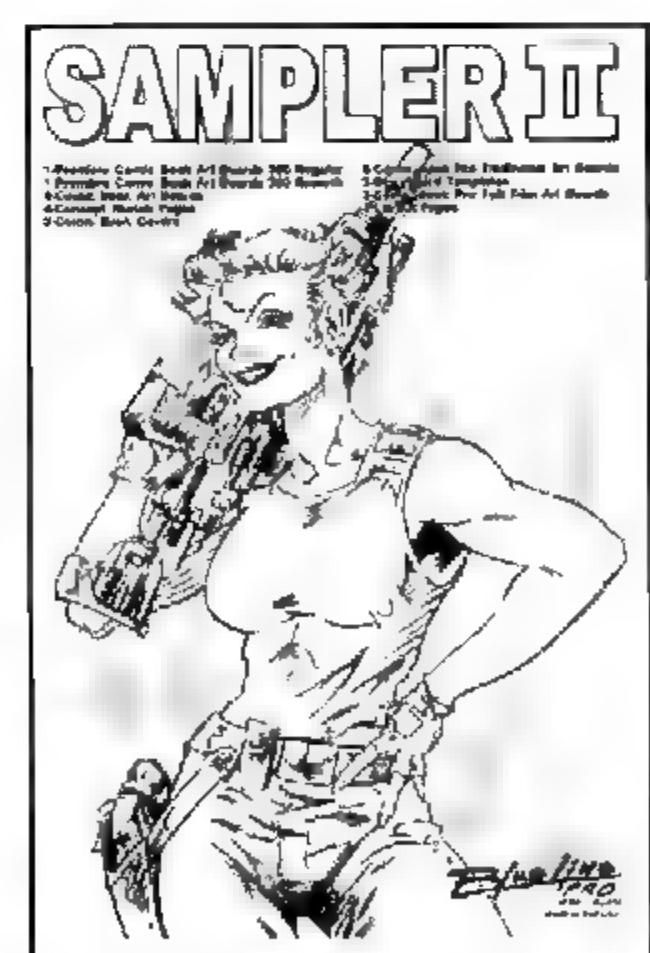
- ITEM# BL1004 SRP \$8.95

25 art pages printed in non-photo blue/ bagged.

BLUE LINE SAMPLER II

If you haven't tried Blue Line products, here's your chance! The Blue Line Sampler includes 4-Comic Book Pages, 4-Concept Sketch Pages, 3-Comic Book Cover Sheets, 3- Layout Pages, 3-Pro Comic Book Pages, 3-Storyboard Templates, 3-Full Bleed Pro C.B. Pages, 1- Strathmore 300 smooth, 1- Strathmore 300 regular. All in non-photo blue, of course! That's 25 pages of five different Blue Line products! Check out all Blue Line and Blue Line Pro products in one fell swoop!

- ITEM# BL1040 SRP \$13.95



25 pages of 8 different Blue Line products. 4-Comic Book Pages, 4-Concept Sketch Pages, 3-Comic Book Cover Sheets, 3- Layout Pages, 3-Pro Comic Book Pages, 3-Storyboard Templates, 3-Full Bleed Pro C.B. Pages, 1- Strathmore 300 smooth, 1- Strathmore 300 regular. 25 pages per pack.

**INDIA INK**

• Higgins Black India Ink

A non-clogging ink for lettering pens and brushes. Opaque semi-gloss black finish and waterproof.

-AR-4415 Black Ink

(Higgins, 1oz. \$3.00)

-AR-EF44011 Black Magic Ink (Higgins, 1oz. \$3.50)

Higgins Waterproof Black Magic Ink is non-corrosive, free-flowing, and non-clogging. Great for use on tracing vellum and other film surfaces



• Pelikan Drawing Ink

One of the finest drawing ink available, Pelikan ink is great with technical pens, graphic and fine art papers or tracing cloth.

-AR-PE211862 Black India Ink (Pelikan)

1oz. \$4.75

-AR-PE211169 Black India Ink (Pelikan)

8oz. \$18.75

• Pelikan "T" Ink

Permanent and completely waterproof. Good with matte-surfaces or waterproof tracing cloth.

-AR-PE221374 Black Ink Pelikan "T" 1oz. \$6.00

• KOH-I-NOOR RAPIDOGRAPH INK

Rapidograph Ink, Black, opaque ink for drafting film, paper, and tracing cloth. For use with Koh-I-Noor Rapidograph Pens.

-AR-3084-F1 Koh-I-Noor Ink \$3.95



• WHITE OUT

FW Acrylic Artist Waterproof White Ink. Great for use with technical pens, brushes, and dip pens.

-A-R-FW-D11 FW White Acrylic Artist Ink \$ 5.00

**BRUSHES**

• Winsor/Newton Series 7

Made with Kolinsky sable with traditional black handle. Great brush.

-AR-5007001 Winsor/Newton Series 7 Size#1 \$18.95

-AR-5007002 Winsor/Newton Series 7 Size#2 \$22.95

-AR-5007003 Winsor/Newton Series 7 Size#3 \$36.75

Round Brushes

Made with natural Sable with excellent edges and points for precise strokes.

-AR-NB-38-0 Round Brush Size #0 \$3.00

-AR-NB-38-1 Round Brush Size #1 \$3.25

-AR-NB-38-2 Round Brush Size #2 \$3.95

-AR-056009016 Round Brush Size#3 \$3.95

**PENCILS & QUILL PENS**

• Non-Photo Blue Pencil

Makes marks not appear when artwork is reproduced. Very useful.

-AR-761-5 Non-photo Blue Pencil

\$6.00

• Quill Inking Pen

Quill Pens offers super-fine flexible point. Used by many professional inkers.

-AR-H9432 Quill Inking Pen #102

(Tip & Holder) \$3.25

-AR-H9402 12 Crow Quill #102 Tips

(Inking Pen Nibs only) \$13.95

**KOH-I-NOOR RAPIDOGRAPH PENS**

Rapidograph Pens are made of impact and chemical-resistant components for drawing and specialty inks. Good balance and self-polishing stainless steel points.

-AR-3165-060 Tech Pen Size 6x0

(13mm) \$27.00

-AR-3165-040 Tech Pen Size 4x0

(18mm) \$27.00

-AR-3165-030 Tech Pen Size 3x0

(25mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-020 Tech Pen Size 2x0

(33mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-010 Tech Pen Size #0

(35mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-01 Tech Pen Size #1

(5mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-02 Tech Pen Size #2

(6mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-03 Tech Pen Size #3

(8mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-04 Tech Pen Size #4

(1mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-06 Tech Pen Size #6

(1.4mm) \$22.00

-AR-3165-07 Tech Pen Size #7

(2mm) \$22.00

• Sakura Pigma Micron

Available in six point sizes. Waterproof, chemical proof and fade resistant and will not smear or feather when dry.

-AR-XSK005-49 20mm, black \$2.95

-AR-XSK01-49 25mm, black \$2.95

-AR-XSK02-49 30mm, black \$2.95

-AR-XSK03-49 35mm, black \$2.95

-AR-XSK05-49 45mm, black \$2.95

-AR-XSK08-49 50mm, black \$2.95

-AR-30061 3-pk., 25, 35, 45mm \$8.00

-AR-30062 All sizes, black \$16.00

-AR-30063 All sizes, black \$16.00

-AR-30064 All sizes, black \$16.00

-AR-30065 All sizes, black \$16.00

-AR-30066 All sizes, black \$16.00

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-AR-30068 All sizes, black \$16.00

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-AR-30070 All sizes, black \$16.00

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-AR-30134 All sizes, black \$16.00

-AR-30135 All sizes, black \$16.00

-AR-30136 All sizes, black \$16.00

-AR-30137 All sizes, black \$16.00

**T-SQUARES**

- Plastic T-squares offering flexible plastic with both metric and standard measurements

- AR-HX02 Plastic 12" \$3.95
- AR-NBA18 Plastic 18" \$7.95
- AR-NBA24 Plastic 24" \$10.95
- Aluminum T-squares offering hard tempered aluminum blade riveted to a rugged plastic head
- AR-FR63-112 Aluminum 12" \$10.95
- AR-FR63-118 Aluminum 18" \$12.95
- AR-FR63-124 Aluminum 24" \$13.95

**TRIANGLES**

High quality triangles made of .080" acrylic. Raised inking edges. Great for inkers.

- 30" x 60" W/ Inking Edge
- AR-1204-60 Triangle 30"x60" 4 inch \$3.50
- AR-1206-60 Triangle 30"x60" 6 inch \$4.50
- AR-1208-60 Triangle 30"x60" 8 inch \$5.50
- AR-1210-60 Triangle 30"x60" 10 inch \$6.50
- AR-1212-60 Triangle 30"x60" 12 inch \$8.50
- AR-1214-60 Triangle 30"x60" 14 inch \$10.50

- 45" X 90" W/ Inking Edge
- AR-1204-45 Triangle 45"x90" 4 inch \$4.50
- AR-1206-45 Triangle 45"x90" 6 inch \$5.50
- AR-1208-45 Triangle 45"x90" 8 inch \$7.50
- AR-1210-45 Triangle 45"x90" 10 inch \$9.50
- AR-1212-45 Triangle 45"x90" 12 inch \$13.50

COMPASS SET

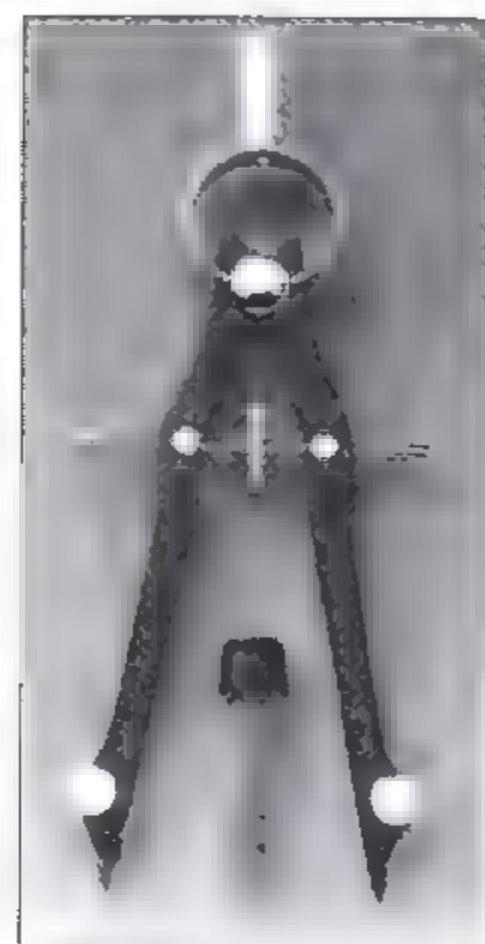
Geometry set includes ruler, compass, two triangles, protractor, eraser, and sharpener

- 8-piece Geometry Set
- AR-HX18807 \$4.95
- 8-Piece Geometry Set (brass compass)
- AR-723405 \$7.95
- Basic Geometry Set
- 4-piece Geometry Set (Ruler, 12" protractor, 30/60 + 45/90 triangles)
- AR-FL03 \$5.95

Basic Combination Compass

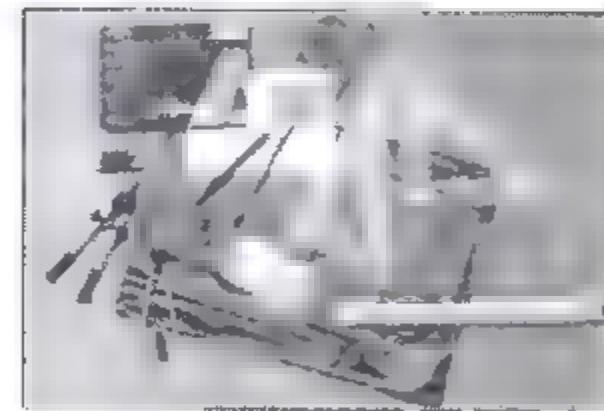
6-piece compass set side-screw bow compass, knee joint compass, extension bar, spare leads, 2" divider point and a lead pointer.

- AR-S61 Set \$15.95
- Compass Set
- 6-piece drawing set contains small side screw compass, 5 1/2" self-centering knee joint compass/divider, extension bar, technical pen adapter, divider point and lead pointer
- ARHLX01330-01330 Set \$16.95

**5" Bow Compass & Divider**

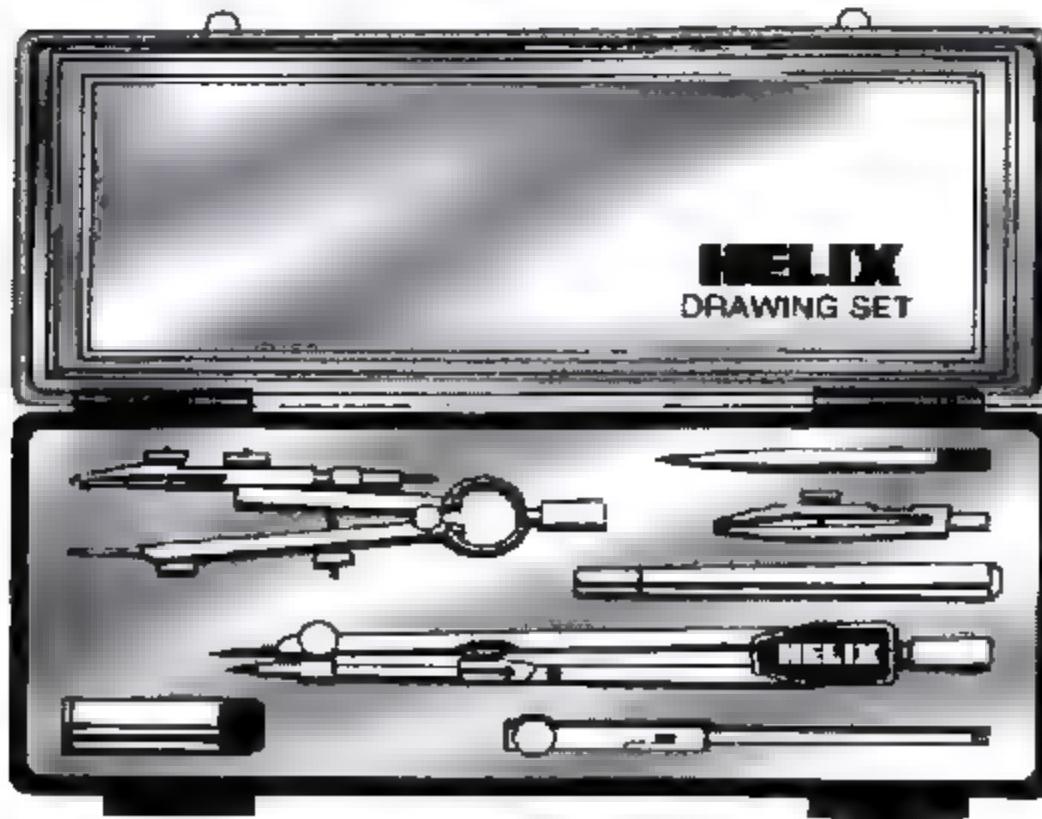
An all metal construction compass with replaceable needle and lead. Makes accurate 8" diameter circles. Extra pivot point for use as a divider.

- AR-494 5" Bow Compass \$4.95

**14 Piece Drafting Kit**

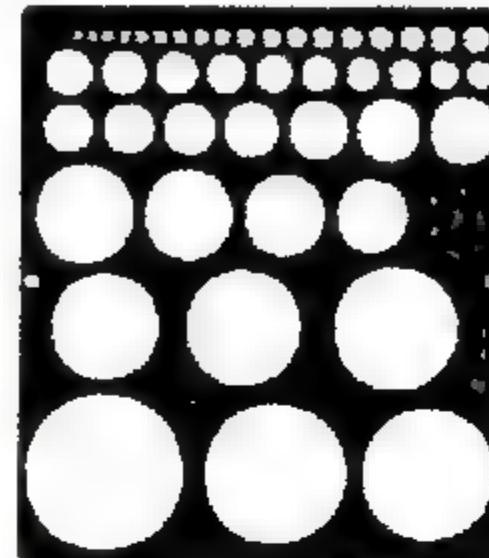
Drafting Kit includes 12' architectural scale, 12x16 vinyl pouch, lettering guide pad, 6" compass, 6" divider, 10" 30/60 triangle, 6" 45/90 triangle, 6" protractor, 6 1/4 french curve, soft pencil eraser, lead holder, min lead pointer, erasing shield and a three pack of 2.0mm lead.

- AR-BDK-1A 15 Piece Drafting Kit \$38.95

**RULERS**

• Stainless Steel Rulers offering flexible steel with non-skid cork backing.

- AR-200-12 Steel Ruler 12 inch Cork Backing \$5.95
- AR-200-18 Steel Ruler 18 inch Cork Backing \$6.95
- Plastic Ruler 1 inch with 1/16" markings and metric markings
- AR-C36 Ruler 12" (plastic ruler) \$1.25
- AR-18 Ruler 6" (plastic ruler) \$0.50

**CIRCLE TEMPLATES / FRENCH CURVES / ELLIPSE TEMPLATES****Circle Templates**

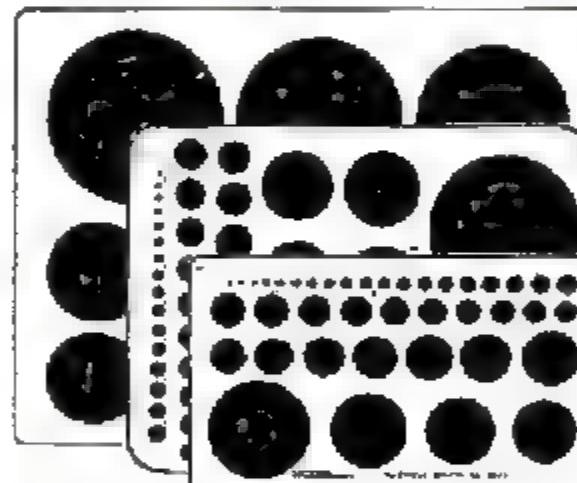
Metric and standard. Risers for smear-free drawing. (Great for inkers)

- Large Circles
- AR-13001 \$7.95
- Extra Large Circles
- AR-13011 \$6.95

**French Curves (Inking Edge)**

- AR-9000 Set \$6.95
- Ellipse Temps.

- AR-PK12691 \$12.00

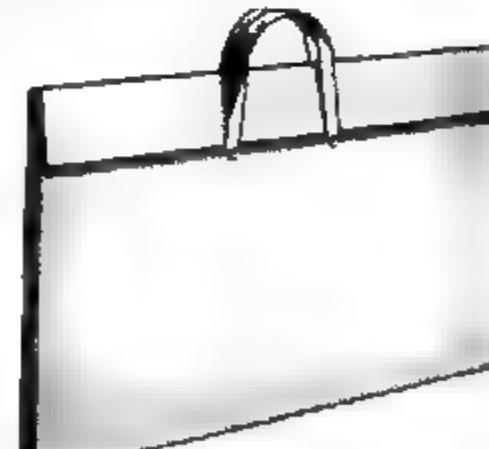
**Circle Templates Set of 3**

This set of 3 templates provides ninety-eight different circles and edge scales in 50th, 16th and 10th as well as mm and centering lines. Sizes ranging from 1/32 inches to 3 1/2 inches.

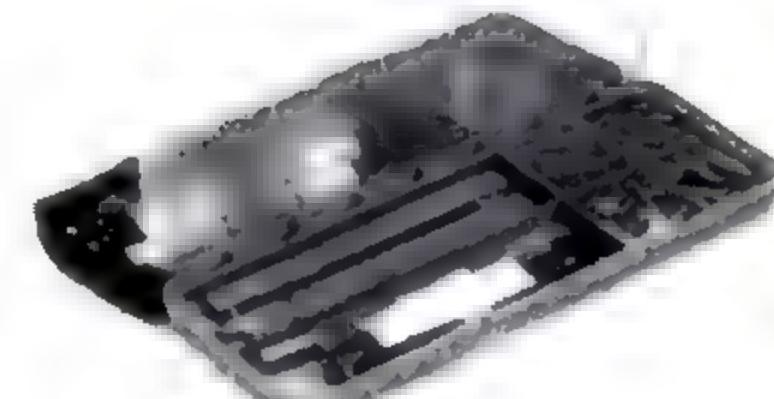
- ITEM #AR-TD404 SRP \$17.95

Ellipse Tempate

- AR-PK12691 \$12.00

**POCKET PORTFOLIO**

- AR-FL419WH Pocket Portfolio 14 x 20 \$10.50

**STORAGE BOXES**

- Sketch Pac 2-sided safe storing box 12 3/8" x 4 1/4" x 1 1/4"
- AR-6880AB \$12.95



- One Tray Art Bin 13" x 7 1/4" x 5 3/4"
- Elevated tray for viewing of supplies in bottom bin. Tight Latch
- AR-6843AC black \$15.25

**DRAFTSMAN BRUSH**

Removes shavings from paper. Cleaning without fear of smudging.

- Draftsman Brush (cleaning paper)
- AR-FT5391 \$6.00

**XACTO KNIFE**

Rubberized barrel. Rear release mechanism with safety cap.

- Xacto Knife
- AR-XA3626 \$5.25
- Xacto Refill Blades #1
- AR-OLKB \$6.50

**RUBBER CEMENT**

Contact adhesive for paste-up and other graphic art uses.

- Rubber Cement 4oz.
- AR-BT138 \$3.50
- Rubber Cement Quart
- AR-BT102 \$13.25
- Rubber Cement Thinner Pint
- AR-BT207 \$8.50
- Rubber Cement Pick-Up (eraser)
- AR-BT700 \$1.50

**COMIC BOOK ORIGINAL ART SLEEVES**

Protect your original Art Work

- Comic Book Original Art Sleeves
- 11 1/2" x 19" Polyethylene (3.0 mil.)
- AR-BAG 1119-25 25 Bags \$7.50
- AR-BAG 1119-100 100 Bag \$25.00

PRISMACOLOR

PRISMACOLOR MARKERS AND SETS

- All Colors are available
- All Singles \$3.30
- Metallic: single nib
- AR-PM117 (Broad) Metallic Silver
- AR-PM118 (Fine) Metallic Silver
- AR-PM119 (Broad) Metallic Gold
- AR-PM120 (Fine) Metallic Gold
- All Metallic Singles \$3.30
- PRISMACOLOR SETS**
- Primary/Secondary 12-Set
Includes: AR-PM 50, 19, 15, 57, 6, 4, 32, 44, 53, 31, 61, and 9.
- AR-BP12N \$40.00
- Cool Grey 12-set
- AR-BP12P \$40.00
- Warm Grey 12-set
- AR-BP12Q \$40.00
- French Grey 12-set
- AR-BP12R \$40.00
- Prismacolor 24 set
- AR-BP24S \$79.25
- Prismacolor 48 set
- AR-BP48S \$158.50
- Prismacolor 72 set
- AR-BP72S \$238.00
- Prismacolor 120 set
- AR-BP120S \$394.00
- Prismacolor 144 set
- AR-BP144S \$470.00
- Empty Studio Marker Stacker
- AR-STUDIO \$18.00
- Prismacolor 24 set w/hard carrying case
- AR-BP24C \$90.00
- Prismacolor 48 set w/hard carrying case
- AR-BP48C \$170.00
- All Colors are available
- AR-PM1 Process Red
- AR-PM4 Crimson Red
- AR-PM5 Scarlet Lake
- AR-PM6 Carmine Red
- AR-PM7 Magenta
- AR-PM8 Pink
- AR-PM10 Blush Pink
- AR-PM11 Deco Pink
- AR-PM12 Light Pink
- AR-PM13 Poppy Red
- AR-PM14 Pale Vermilion
- AR-PM15 Yellowed Orange
- AR-PM16 Orange
- AR-PM17 Sunburst Yellow
- AR-PM18 Yellow Ochre
- AR-PM19 Canary Yellow
- AR-PM21 Tulip Yellow
- AR-PM23 Cream
- AR-PM24 Yellow Chartreuse
- AR-PM25 Spring Green
- AR-PM26 Lt Olive Green
- AR-PM27 Chartreuse
- AR-PM28 Olive Green
- AR-PM31 Dark Green
- AR-PM32 Parrot Green
- AR-PM33 Hunter Green
- AR-PM36 Lime Green
- AR-PM37 Aquamarine
- AR-PM38 Teal Blue
- AR-PM39 True Blue
- AR-PM40 Copenhagen Blue
- AR-PM42 Violet Blue
- AR-PM43 Indigo Blue
- AR-PM44 Ultramarine
- AR-PM45 Navy Blue
- AR-PM46 Light Aqua
- AR-PM47 Non-photo Blue
- AR-PM48 Lt. Cerulean Blue
- AR-PM50 Violet
- AR-PM51 Black Grape
- AR-PM53 Mulberry
- AR-PM55 Rhodamine
- AR-PM59 Lavender
- AR-PM60 Violet Mist
- AR-PM61 Dark Umber
- AR-PM62 Sepia
- AR-PM65 Sienna Brown
- AR-PM69 Goldenrod
- AR-PM70 Sand
- AR-PM71 Buff
- AR-PM72 Eggshell
- AR-PM73 Flagstone Red

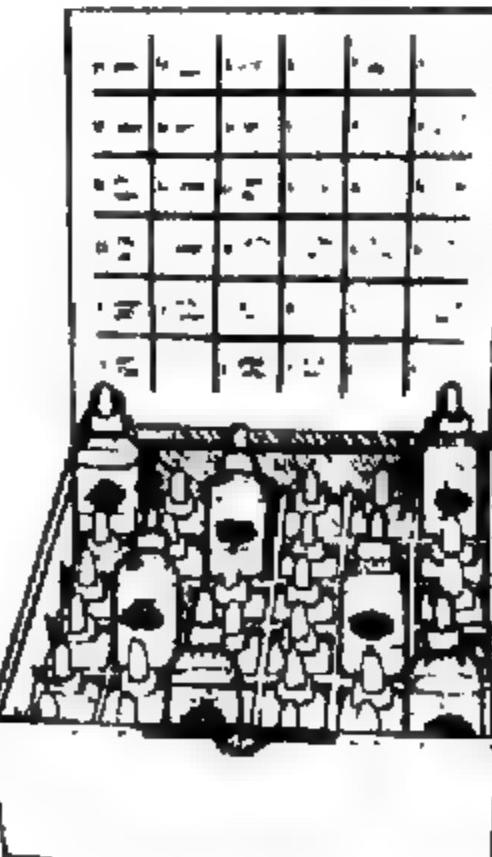


- Prismacolor Singles
- Unique four in one design creates four line widths from one double-ended marker. Extra broad nibs imitates paint brush stroke while fine and thin nibs achieve gentle refined strokes.



• Prismacolor Art Pencil Sets

- Professional Art Pencil Sets Soft lead, permanent pigments, blendable. Water and smear resistant. No eraser
- 12 Color Pencil Set - ARSAN03596 \$13.95
 - 24 Color Pencil Set - ARSAN03597 \$26.95
 - 48 Color Pencil Set - ARSAN03598 \$51.95
 - 72 Color Pencil Set - ARSAN03599 \$76.95
 - 96 Color Pencil Set - ARSAN03601 \$101.95
 - 120 Color Pencil Set - ARSAN03602 \$127.95



Dr. Martin Watercolors



- Radiant Concentrated Watercolors Dr. Martin's Extremely concentrated watercolors. Giving great brilliance and radiant tones in illustrations. They may be diluted with water and blend freely. Radiant colors are less transparent than synchronic colors. In 5 oz dropper top bottles. SRP \$3.95 each

ARDR4A A pine Rose
ARDR16B Amber Yellow
ARDR42C Antelope Brow
ARDR23B Apple Green
ARDR14A Black
ARDR31C Burnt Orange
ARDR41C Calypso Green
ARDR34C Chartreuse
ARDR6A Cherry Red
ARDR56D Coffee Brown
ARDR18B Crimson
ARDR20B Cycamen
ARDR15B Daffodil Yellow
ARDR48D Fuchsia
ARDR26B Golden Brown
ARDR11A Grass Green
ARDR32C Hyacinth Blue
ARDR51D Ice Blue
ARDR50D Ice Green
ARDR37C Ice Pink
ARDR40C Ice Yellow
ARDR54D Indian Yellow
ARDR53D Irish Blue
ARDR35C Jungle Green
ARDR12A Juniper Green
ARDR1A Lemon Yellow
ARDR27B Mahogany
ARDR24B Moss Green
ARDR7A Moss Rose
ARDR33C Norway Blue
ARDR25B Olive Green
ARDR2A Orange
ARDR52D Peacock Blue
ARDR3A Persimmon
ARDR30C Pumpkin
ARDR49D Raspberry
ARDR13A Saddle Brown
ARDR5A Scarlet
ARDR28B Sepia
ARDR22B Slate Blue
ARDR46D Sunrise Pink
ARDR44D Sunset Orange
ARDR45D Sunset Red
ARDR43D Sunshine Yellow
ARDR47D Tahiti Red
ARDR17B Tangerine
ARDR29C Tapestry
ARDR55D Tiger Yellow
ARDR36C Tobacco Brown
ARDR38C Tropic Gold
ARDR39C Tropic Pink
ARDR9A True Blue
ARDR8A Turquoise Blue
ARDR21B Ultra Blue
ARDR10A Violet
ARDR19B Wild Rose

- Synchronic Transparent Watercolors Dr. Martin Synchronic colors are easy to handle and give ultimate transparency. They may be diluted with water 5 oz. Dropper top bottles.

SRP \$3.95

ARDR15	Beige
ARDR33	Black
ARDR38	Blush Back
ARDR8	Burnt Senna
ARDR2	Cadmium
ARDR32	Cadmium Orange
ARDR26	Carmine
ARDR28	Cerise
ARDR3	Chromium Yellow
ARDR39	Cobalt Blue
ARDR13	Dark Gray
ARDR21	Emerald
ARDR22	Hooker's Green
ARDR24	Lake
ARDR1	Lemon Yellow
ARDR6	Light Brown
ARDR11	Light Gray
ARDR27	Magenta
ARDR12	Medium Gray
ARDR20	Nile Green
ARDR34	Olive Green
ARDR5	Orange
ARDR19	Payne's Gray
ARDR17	Prussian Blue
ARDR30	Purple
ARDR7	Red Brown
ARDR37	Rose Carmine
ARDR36	Scarlet
ARDR10	Sepia
ARDR31	Stone Gray
ARDR16	Turquoise Blue
ARDR18	Ultramarine
ARDR9	Van Dyke Brown
ARDR26	Vermilion
ARDR29	Violet
ARDR23	Viridian
ARDR4	Yellow Ochre

• Synchronic Transparent Art Set

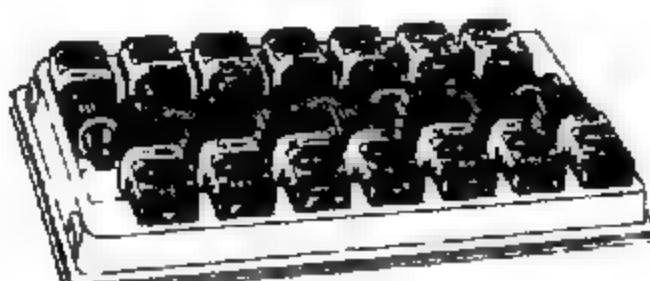
• #ARDRCS Thirty-six .5 oz bottles. Includes: Beige, Black, Burnt Sienna, Cadmium, Cadmium Orange, Carmine, Cerise, Chromium Yellow, Cobalt Blue, Dark Gray, Emerald, Hooker's Green, Lake, Lemon Yellow, Light Brown, Light Gray, Magenta, Medium Gray, Nile Green, Olive Green, Orange, Payne's Gray, Prussian Blue, Purple, Red Brown, Rose Carmine, Scarlet, Sepia, Turquoise Blue, Ultramarine, Van Dyke Brown, Vermilion, Violet, Viridian, Yellow Ochre

SRP \$113.50

• Synchronic Transparent Art Small Set

• #ARDRSS Sixteen .5 oz. Bottles Includes: Black, Burnt Sienna, Cadmium, Cadmium Orange, Cobalt Blue, Emerald, Lemon Yellow, Magenta, Nile Green, Purple, Rose Carmine, Sepia, Turquoise Blue, Ultramarine, Vermilion, Yellow Ochre

SRP \$46.55



You must purchase a minimum of 12 single dyes each time you order.

You must purchase a minimum of 12 single dyes each time you order.

COPIC MARKERS, AIR MARKERS, TONES, REFILLS

COPIC

COPIC Markers have been widely used in Europe and Asia where their coloring qualities go hand in hand with the style we know as manga. Their versatility and variety lends itself to the imagination of the creator and gives him or her options for their creative style. The standard square designed COPIC marker is double-ended and fast drying. COPICs have been specially formulated with a toner designed not to dissolve making them able to work directly onto photocopied surfaces and provide clear unblemished color. One of the best parts about COPIC markers is their refillable ink and replaceable nib features.

• Single Copic Markers \$4.95 each	100R37 Carmine 100R39 Garnet 100R59 Cardinal 100RV02 Sugared Almond Pink 100RV04 Shock Pink 100RV06 Cerise 100RV09 Fuchsia 100RV10 Pale Pink 100RV11 Pink 100RV13 Tender Pink 100RV14 Begonia Pink 100RV17 Deep Magenta 100RV19 Red Violet 100RV21 Light Pink 100RV25 Dog Rose Flower 100RV29 Crimson 100V04 Licac 100V06 Lavender 100V09 Violet 100V12 Pale Lilac 100V15 Mallow 100V17 Amethyst 100W0 Warm Gray 0 100W1 Warm Gray 1 100W10 Warm Gray 10 100W2 Warm Gray 2 100W3 Warm Gray 3 100W4 Warm Gray 4 100W5 Warm Gray 5 100W6 Warm Gray 6 100W7 Warm Gray 7 100W8 Warm Gray 8 100W9 Warm Gray 9 100Y00 Barium Yellow 100Y02 Canary Yellow 100Y06 Yellow 100Y08 Acid Yellow 100Y11 Pale Yellow 100Y13 Lemon Yellow 100Y15 Cadmium Yellow 100Y17 Golden Yellow 100Y19 Napol Yellow 100Y21 Buttercup Yellow 100Y23 Yellowish Beige 100Y26 Mustard 100Y38 Honey 100YG01 Green Bice 100YG03 Yellow Green 100YG05 Salad 100YG07 Acid Green 100YG09 Lettuce Green 100YG11 Mignonette 100YG13 Chartreuse 100YG17 Grass Green 100YG21 Anise 100YG23 New Leaf 100YG25 Celadon Green 100YG41 Pale Green 100YG45 Cobalt Green 100YG63 Pea Green 100YG67 Moss 100YG91 Putty 100YG95 Pale Olive 100YG97 Spanish Olive 100YG99 Marine Green 100YR00 Powder Pink 100YR02 Light Orange 100YR04 Chrome Orange 100YR07 Cadmium Orange 100YR09 Chinese Orange 100YR14 Carambe 100YR16 Apricot 100YR18 Sanguine 100YR21 Creme 100YR23 Yellow Ochre 100YR24 Pea Sepia • COPIC MARKER SETS 110 COPIC 12 Basic \$59.40 112 COPIC 12 PCS NG \$59.40 114 COPIC 12 PCS TG \$59.40 116 COPIC 12 PCS WG \$59.40 118 COPIC 12 PCS CG \$59.40 120 COPIC 36 Color Set \$178.20 140 Copic 72 Color Set A \$356.40 150 Copic 72 Color Set B \$356.40 155 Copic 72 Color Set C \$356.40 160 Copic Empty Marker \$3.60 • COPIC Various Ink (Refills) \$4.95 200100 Black 200110 Spec a. Black 200B00 Frost Blue 200B000 Pale Porcelain Blue	200B01 Mint Blue 200B02 Robin's Egg Blue 200B04 Tahitian Blue 200B05 Process Blue 200B06 Peacock Blue 200B12 Ice Blue 200B14 Light Blue 200B16 Cyanine Blue 200B18 Lapis Lazuli 200B21 Baby Blue 200B23 Phthalo Blue 200B24 Sky 200B26 Cobalt Blue 200B28 Royal Blue 200B29 Ultramarine 200B32 Pale Blue 200B34 Manganese Blue 200B37 Antwerp Blue 200B39 Prussian Blue 200B41 Powder Blue 200B45 Smoky Blue 200B52 Soft Greenish Blue 200B60 Pale Blue Grey 200B63 Light Hydrangea 200B79 Iris 200B91 Pale Grayish Blue 200B93 Light Crockery Blue 200B95 Light Grayish Cobalt 200B97 Night Blue 200B99 Agate 200BG01 Aqua Blue 200BG02 New Blue 200BG05 Holiday Blue 200BG07 Petroleum Blue 200BG09 Blue Green 200BG10 Cool Shadow 200BG11 Moon White 200BG13 Mint Green 200BG15 Aqua 200BG18 Teal Blue 200BG23 Coral Sea 200BG32 Aqua Mint 200BG34 Horizon Green 200BG45 Nile Blue 200BG49 Duck Blue 200BG93 Green Gray 200BG98 Bush 200BG99 Fragstone Blue 200BV00 Mauve Shadow 200BV000 Iridescent Mauve 200BV02 Prune 200BV04 Blue Berry 200BV06 Blue Violet 200BV11 Soft Violet 200BV13 Hydrangea Blue 200BV17 Deep Reddish Blue 200BV20 Dul Lavender 200BV23 Grayish Lavender 200BV25 Grayish Violet 200BV29 Slate 200BV31 Pale Lavender 200C0 Cool Gray 200C1 Cool Gray 1 200C10 Cool Gray 10 200C2 Cool Gray 2 200C3 Cool Gray 3 200C4 Cool Gray 4 200C5 Cool Gray 5 200C6 Cool Gray 6 200C7 Cool Gray 7 200C8 Cool Gray 8 200C9 Cool Gray 9 200E00 Skin White 200E01 Pale Fruil Pink 200E02 Fruit Pink 200E04 Lipstick Natural 200E07 Light Mahogany 200E08 Brown 200E09 Burnt Sienna 200E11 Bareley Beige 200E13 Light Suntan 200E15 Dark Suntan 200E19 Redwood 200E21 Baby Skin Pink 200E25 Caribe Cocoa 200E27 Africano 200E29 Burnt Umber 200E31 Brick Beige 200E33 Sand 200E34 Orientale 200E35 Chamois 200E37 Sepia 200E39 Leather 200E40 Brick White 200E41 Pearl White 200E43 Dull Ivory 200E44 Clay 200E47 Dark Brown 200E49 Dark Bark 200E50 Egg Shell 200E51 Milky White 200E53 Raw Silk 200E55 Light Camei 200E57 Light Walnut 200E59 Walnut 200E71 Champagne 200E74 Cocoa Brown 200E77 Maroon 200E79 Cashew 200E93 Tea Rose 200E95 Flesh Pink 200E97 Deep Orange 200E99 Baked Clay 200FB2 Fluorescent Dull Blue 200FBG2 Fluorescent Dull Blue Green 200FRV1 Fluorescent Pink 200FV2 Fluorescent Dull Violet 200FY1 Fluorescent Yellow Orange 200FYG1 Fluorescent Yellow 200FYG2 Fluorescent 200FYR1 Fluorescent Orange 200G00 Jade Green 200G02 Spectrum Green 200G05 Emerald Green 200G07 Nile Green 200G09 Veronese Green 200G12 Sea Green 200G14 Apple Green 200G16 Malachite 200G17 Forest Green 200G19 Bright Parrot Green 200G20 Wax White 200G21 Lime Green 200G24 Willow 200G28 Ocean Green 200G29 Pine Tree Green 200G40 Dm Green 200G82 Spring Dm Green 200G85 Verdigris 200G94 Gray sh Olive 200G99 Olive 200G00 Barium Yellow 200G02 Canary Yellow 200G04 Acacia 200G06 Yellow 200G08 Acid Yellow 200G11 Pale Yellow 200G13 Lemon Yellow 200G15 Cadmium Yellow 200G17 Golden Yellow 200G19 Napol Yellow 200G21 Buttercup Yellow 200G23 Yellowish Beige 200G26 Mustard 200G28 Lonet Gold 200G32 Cashmere 200G35 Maize 200G38 Honey 200G00 Mimosa Yellow 200G01 Green Bice 200G03 Yellow Green 200G05 Salad 200G06 Yellowish Green 200G07 Acid Green 200G09 Lettuce Green 200G11 Mignonette 200G13 Chartreuse 200G17 Grass Green 200G21 Anise	200N0 Neutra. Gray 200N1 Neutra. Gray 1 200N10 Neutral Gray 10 200N2 Neutra. Gray 2 200N3 Neutra. Gray 3 200N4 Neutra. Gray 4 200N5 Neutra. Gray 5 200N6 Neutra. Gray 6 200N7 Neutra. Gray 7 200N8 Neutra. Gray 8 200N9 Neutra. Gray 9 200N10 Neutra. Gray 10 200N11 Neutra. Gray 11 200N12 Neutra. Gray 12 200N13 Neutra. Gray 13 200N14 Neutra. Gray 14 200N15 Neutra. Gray 15 200N16 Neutra. Gray 16 200N17 Neutra. Gray 17 200N18 Neutra. Gray 18 200N19 Neutra. Gray 19 200N20 Neutra. Gray 20 200N21 Neutra. Gray 21 200N22 Neutra. Gray 22 200N23 Neutra. Gray 23 200N24 Neutra. Gray 24 200N25 Neutra. Gray 25
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200YG23 New Leaf
 200YG25 Celadon Green
 200YG41 Pale Green
 200YG45 Cobalt Green
 200YG63 Pea Green
 200YG67 Moss
 200YG91 Putty
 200YG93 Grayish Yellow
 200YG95 Pale Olive
 200YG97 Spanish Olive
 200YG99 Marine Green
 200YR00 Powder Pink
 200YR000 Silk
 200YR02 Light Orange
 200YR04 Chrome Orange
 200YR07 Cadmium Orange
 200YR09 Chinese Orange
 200YR14 Caramel
 200YR16 Apricot
 200YR18 Sanguine
 200YR20 Yellowish Shade
 200YR21 Cream
 200YR23 Yellow Ochre
 200YR24 Pale Sepia
 200YR31 Light Reddish Yellow
 200YR61 Yellowish Skin Pink
 200YR65 Atoll
 200YR68 Orange



Colorless Blender

210 Various Ink Colorless Blender \$3.75
 220 Various Colorless Blender 200c \$9.75
 230 Various Ink Empty Bottle \$2.65

**• Replacable Marker Nibs \$4.20**

Another great feature about COPIC markers is their interchangeable nibs. From broad to calligraphy - provide greater freedom of technique in your renderings. COPIC Nibs deliver clear vibrant color on photocopied surfaces as well as glass, plastics and metals. The nibs are made of strong but flexible polyester for smooth consistent application. Nibs come in a pack of 10 except for the brush variety that comes in a pack of 3.

300 Standard Broad
 310 Soft Broad
 320 Round
 330 Calligraphy 5mm
 340 Brush
 350 Standard Fine
 360 Super Fine
 370 Semi Broad
 380 Calligraphy 3mm
 385 Sketch Nib Super Brush
 390 Sketch Nib Medium Broad

**400 Copic Tweezer \$4.20**

Our special COPIC Tweezers give you an easy no-mess nib change that gets you drawing again in minutes. Being able to change nibs quickly helps you keep up with the most demanding marker techniques.

• COPIC SKETCH MARKERS

The oval designed Sketch COPIC marker is double-ended and is fast drying. COPICs have been specially formulated with a toner designed not to dissolve making them able to work directly onto photocopied surfaces and provide clear unblemished color. COPIC Sketch markers' oval body profile gives you a feel of a fast flowing experience in your

hands. It paints as well as it draws. They come with a broad nib and a brush like nib, available in medium + broad and super brush making them great for delicate or bold expression from fashion and graphics to textiles and fine arts lettering/calligraphy. COPIC sketch markers are available in 286 colors. One of the best parts about COPIC markers is their refillable ink and replaceable nib features.

450 Colorless Blender \$4.20
 45100 Black \$4.20
 45110 Special Black \$4.20
 452 Sketch 12 Basic Set \$58.40
 454 Sketch 36 Basic Set \$178.20
 456 Sketch 72 set A \$356.40
 458 Sketch 72 Set B \$356.40

• Single COPIC SKETCH Markers \$4.95

45B00 Frost Blue
 45B000 Pale Porcelain Blue
 45B01 Mint Blue
 45B02 Robins Egg Blue
 45B04 Tahitian Blue
 45B05 Process Blue
 45B06 Peacock Blue
 45B12 Ice Blue
 45B14 Light Blue
 45B16 Cyanine \$4.95
 45B18 Lapis Lazuli
 45B21 Baby Blue
 45B23 Phthalate Blue
 45B24 Sky
 45B26 Cobalt Blue
 45B28 Royal Blue
 45B29 Ultra Marine
 45B32 Pale Blue
 45B34 Manganese Blue
 45B37 Antwerp Blue
 45B39 Prussian Blue
 45B41 Powder Blue
 45B45 Smokey Blue
 45B52 Soft Greenish Blue
 45B60 Pale Blue Gray
 45B63 Light Hydrangea
 45B79 Iris
 45B91 Pale Grayish Blue
 45B93 Light Crockery Blue
 45B95 Light Grayish Cobalt
 45B97 Night Blue
 45B99 Agate
 45BG01 Aqua Blue
 45BG02 New Blue
 45BG05 Holiday Blue
 45BG07 Petroleum Blue
 45BG09 Blue Green
 45BG10 Cool Shadow
 45BG11 Moon White
 45BG13 Mint Green
 45BG15 Aqua
 45BG18 Tea Blue
 45BG23 Coral Sea
 45BG32 Aqua Mint
 45BG34 Horizon Green
 45BG45 Nile Blue
 45BG49 Duck Blue
 45BG93 Green
 45BG96 Bush
 45BG99 Fragstone Blue
 45BV00 Mauve Shadow
 45BV000 Iridescent Mauve
 45BV02 Prune
 45BV04 Blue Berry
 45BV08 Blue Violet
 45BV11 Soft Violet
 45BV13 Hydrangea Blue
 45BV17 Deep Reddish Blue
 45BV20 Dull Lavender
 45BV23 Grayish Lavender
 45BV25 Grayish Violet
 45BV29 Sata
 45BV31 Pale Lavender
 45C0 Cool Gray 0
 45C1 Cool Gray 1
 45C10 Cool Gray 10
 45C2 Cool Gray 2
 45C3 Cool Gray 3
 45C4 Cool Gray 4
 45C5 Cool Gray 5
 45C6 Cool Gray 6
 45C7 Cool Gray 7
 45C8 Cool Gray 8
 45C9 Cool Gray 9
 45E00 Skin White
 45E000 Pale Fruit Pink
 45E01 Pink Flamingo
 45E02 Fruit Pink
 45E04 Lipstick Natural
 45E07 Light Mahogany
 45E08 Brown
 45E09 Burnt Sienna
 45E11 Barely Beige
 45E13 Light Suntan
 45E15 Dark Suntan
 45E19 Redwood
 45E21 Baby Skin Pink
 45E25 Canbe Cocoa

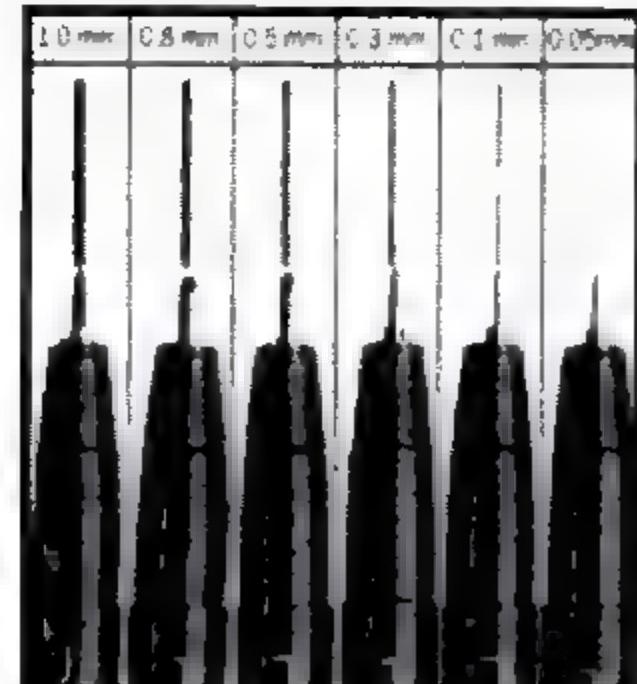
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 45E29 Burnt Umber
 45E31 Brick Beige
 45E33 Sand
 45E34 Orientale
 45E35 Chamois
 45E37 Sepia
 45E39 Leather
 45E40 Brick White
 45E41 Pear White
 45E43 Dull Ivory
 45E44 Gray
 45E47 Dark Brown
 45E48 Dark Bark
 45E49 Eggshell
 45E51 Milky White
 45E53 Raw Silk
 45E55 Light Camel
 45E57 Light Walnut
 45E59 Walnut
 45E71 Champagne
 45E74 Cocoa Brown
 45E77 Maroon
 45E79 Cashew
 45E93 Tea Rose
 45E95 Flesh Pink
 45E97 Deep Orange
 45E99 Baked Clay
 45FB2 Fluorescent Dull Blue
 45FBG2 Fluorescent Dull Blue
 45FYG1 Fluorescent Yellow
 45FYQ2 Fluorescent Yellow
 45FRV1 Fluorescent Pink
 45FV2 Fluorescent Dull Violet
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 45FY11 Orange
 45FY12 Fluorescent Yellow
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 45G00 Jade Green
 45G02 Spectrum Green
 45G05 Emerald Green
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 45G85 Verdigris
 45G94 Grayish Olive
 45G99 Olive
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 45N1 Neutral Gray 1
 45N10 Neutral Gray 10
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 45R00 Pinkish White
 45R000 Cherry White
 45R02 Flesh
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 45RV25 Dog Rose Flower
 45RV29 Crimson

45RV32 Shadow Pink
 45RV34 Dark Pink
 45RV42 Salmon Pink
 45T0 Toner Gray 0
 45T1 Toner Gray 1
 45T10 Toner Gray 10
 45T2 Toner Gray 2
 45T3 Toner Gray 3
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 45V04 Linac
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 45V09 Violet
 45V12 Pale Lilac
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 45V17 Amethyst
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 45V95 Light Grape
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 45W95 Warm Gray 95
 45W96 Warm Gray 96
 45W97 Warm Gray 97
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A compressed air can that attaches directly to the COPIC Airbrush adapter is available for portability. This is the airbrush ABS-1 Kit. It comes with 1 Air Grip (where the pen goes in) 2 The air adapter (where the empty canister that the air grip screws on to. This canister is just a reservoir. It does not contain air) 3. The air hose (this connects from the bottom of the air adapter to the top of the aircan) 4. The aircan 80.5. The air can holder (a foam square with 3 holes in it so that you can stand the different sizes of aircans). This kit has all of the components in it for someone who would like to have portability but have to option to connect it to a compressor.

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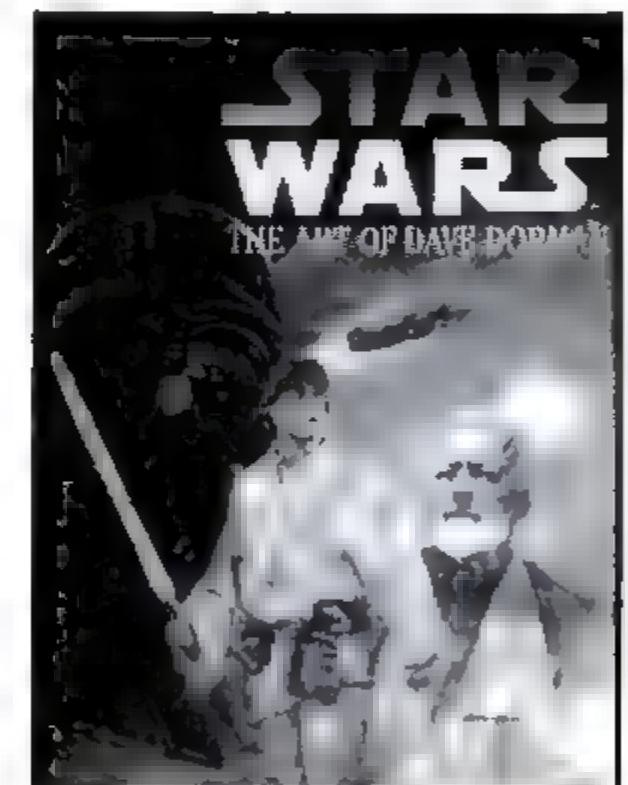
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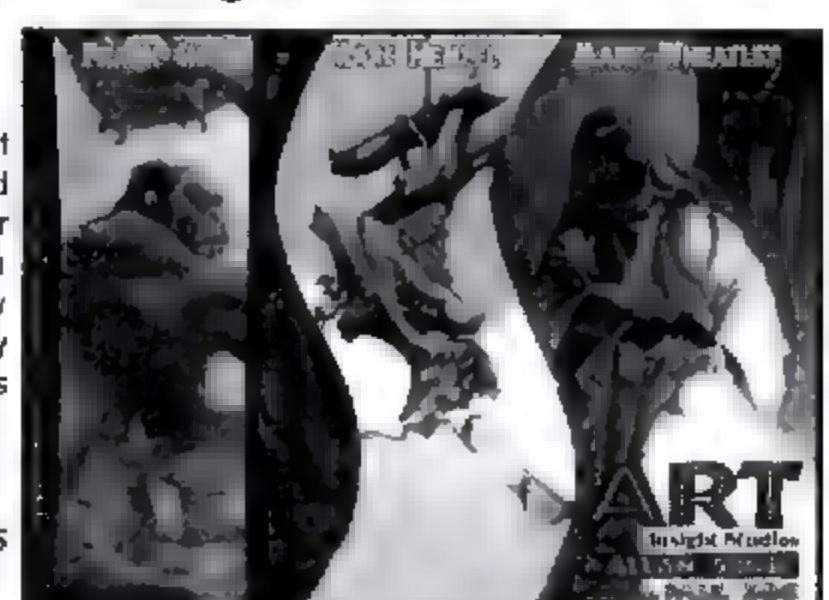
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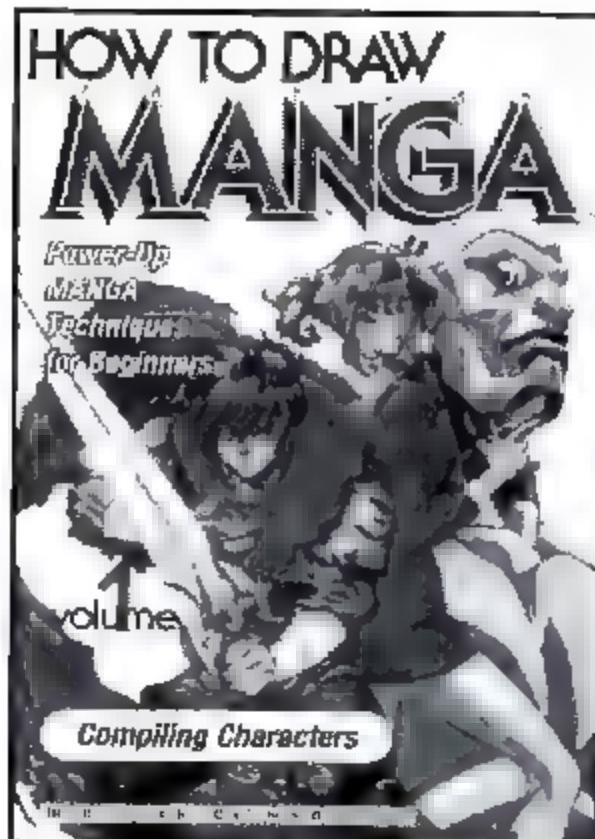
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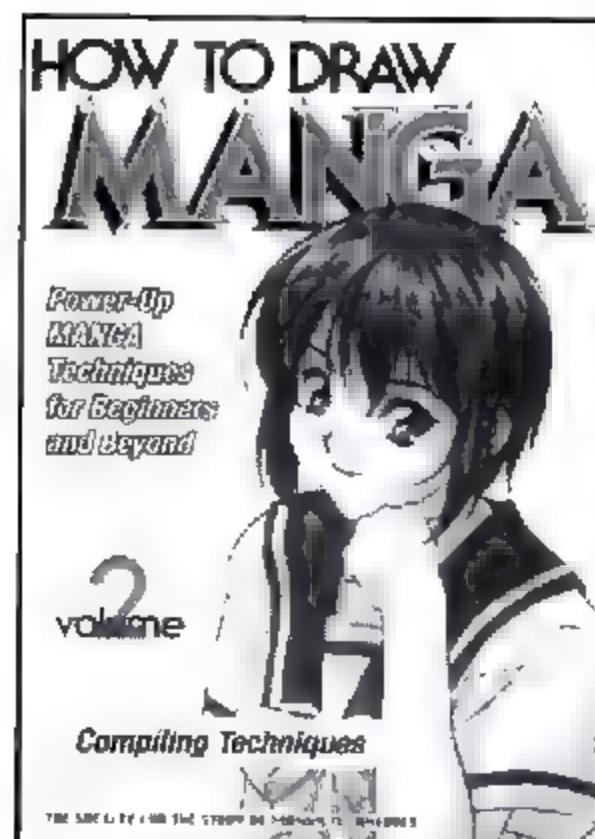
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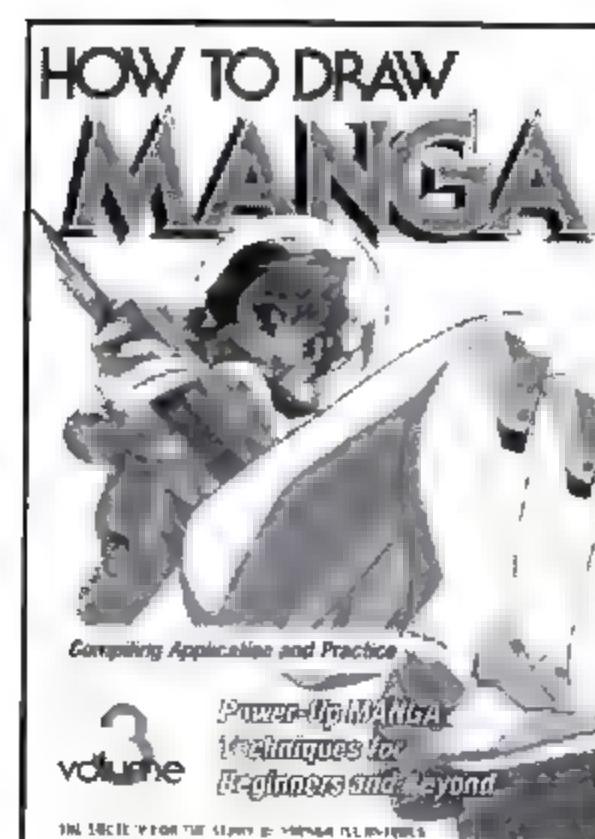
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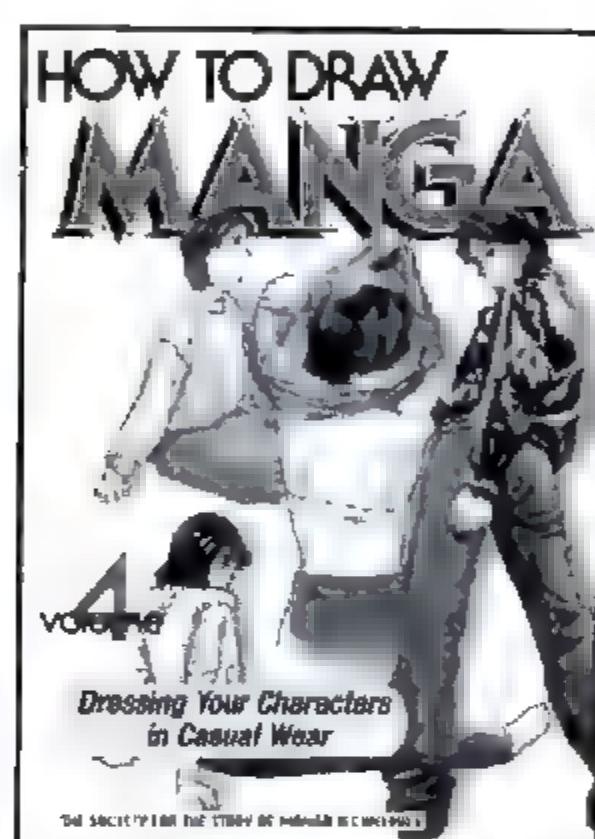
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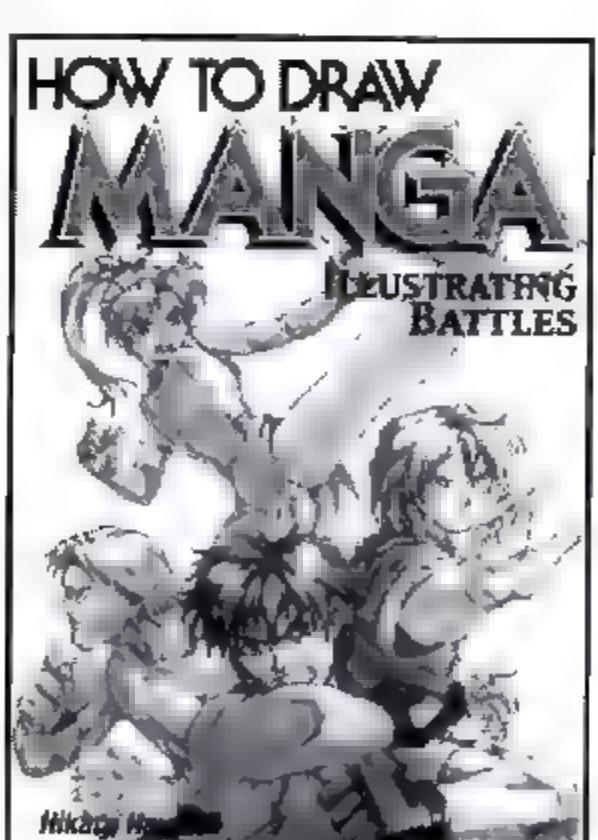
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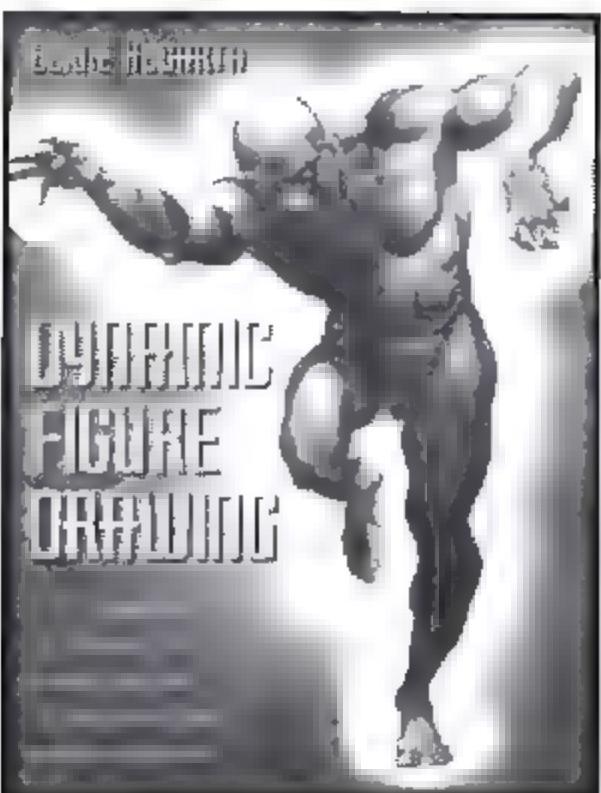
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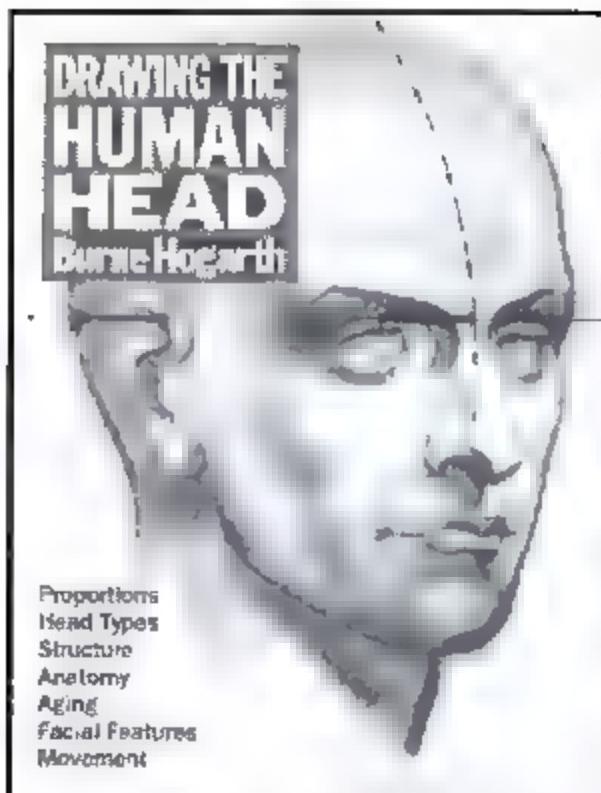
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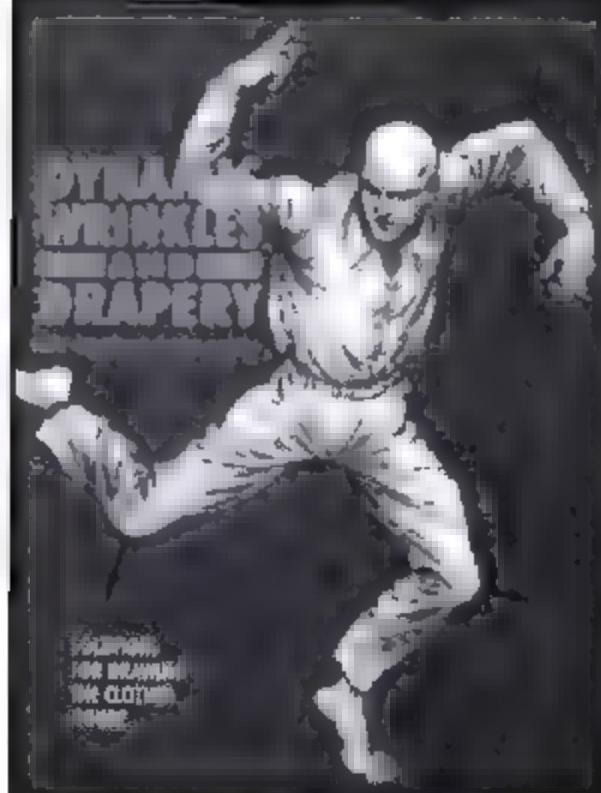
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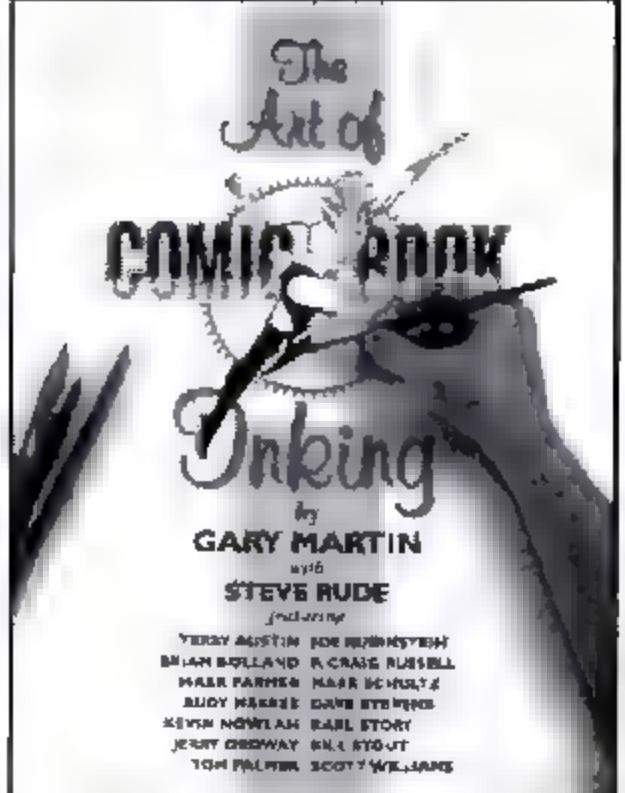
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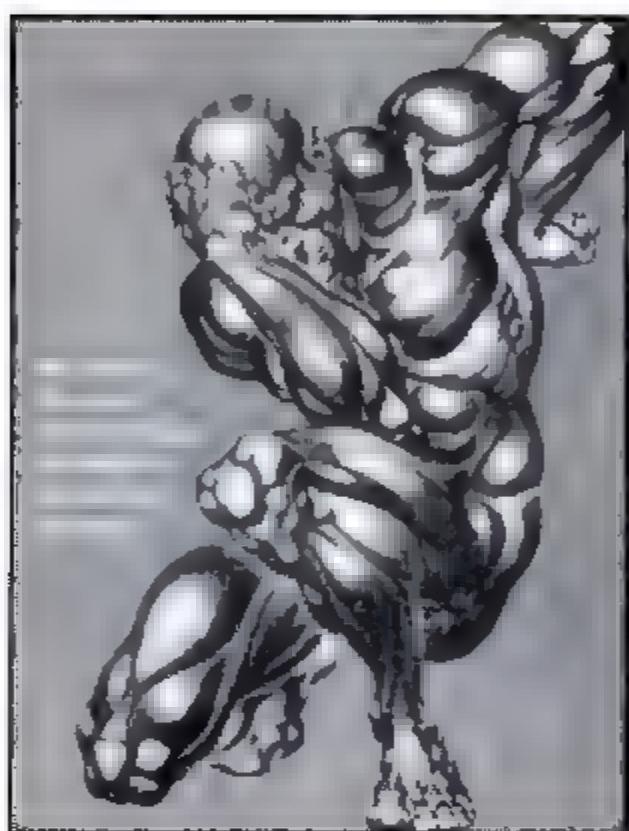
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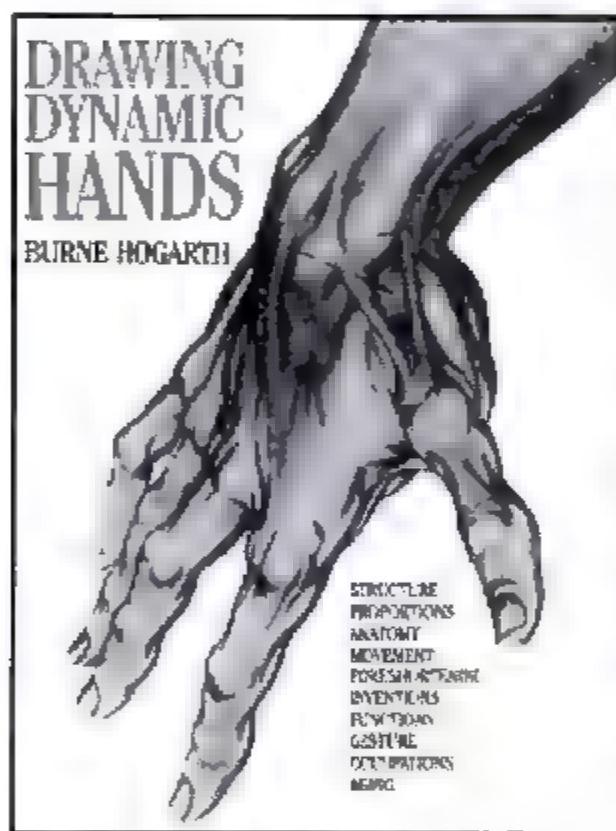
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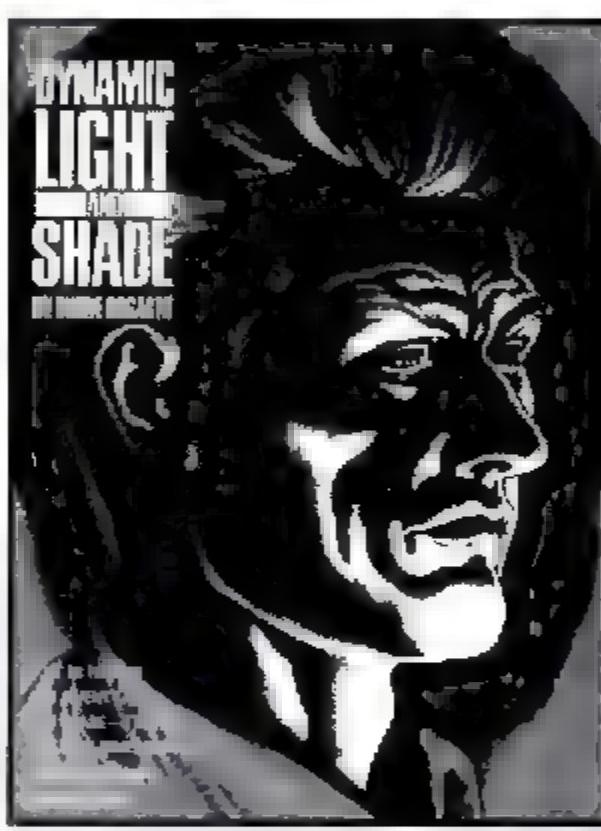
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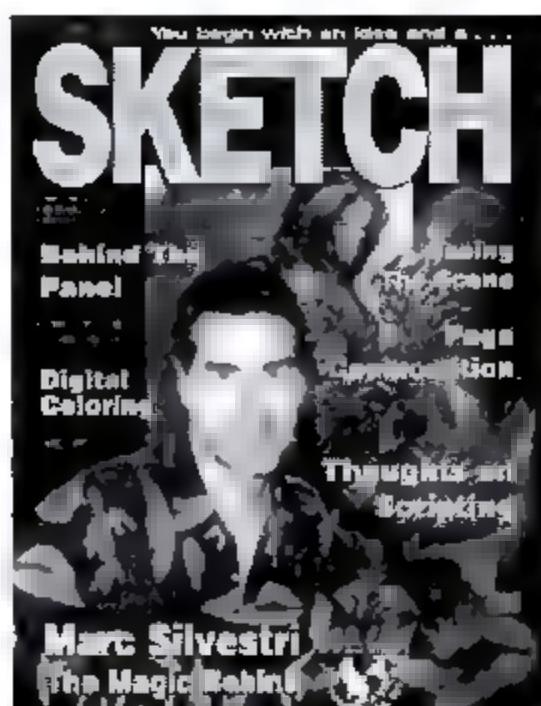
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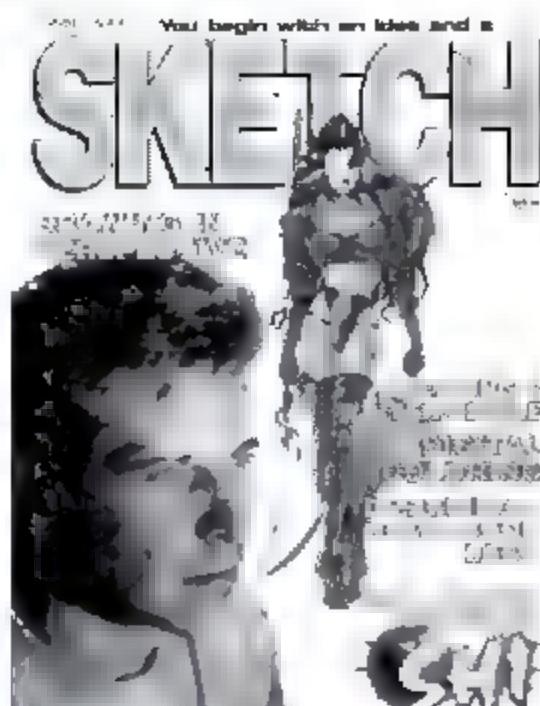
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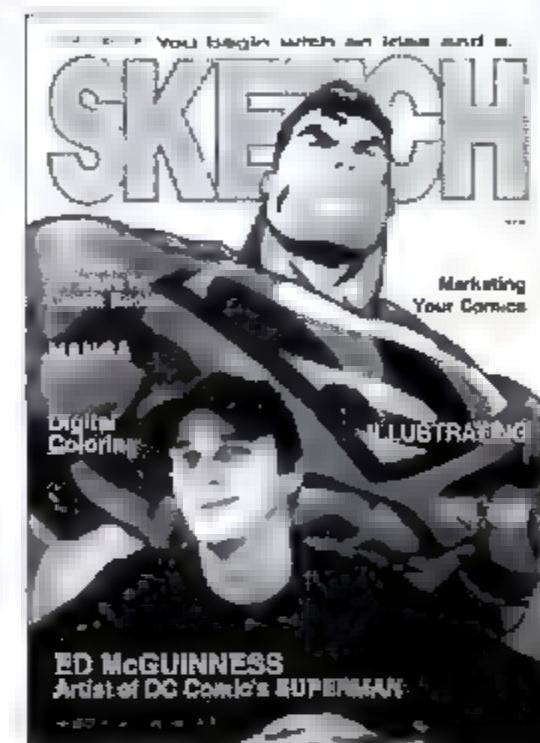
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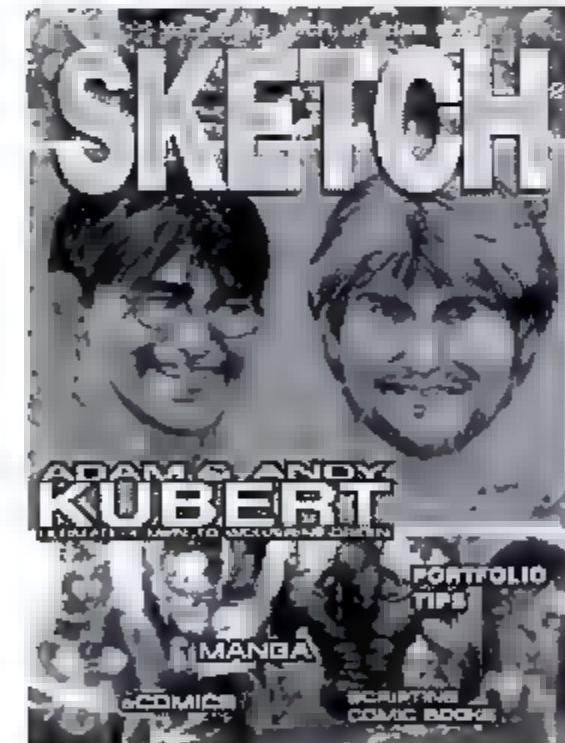
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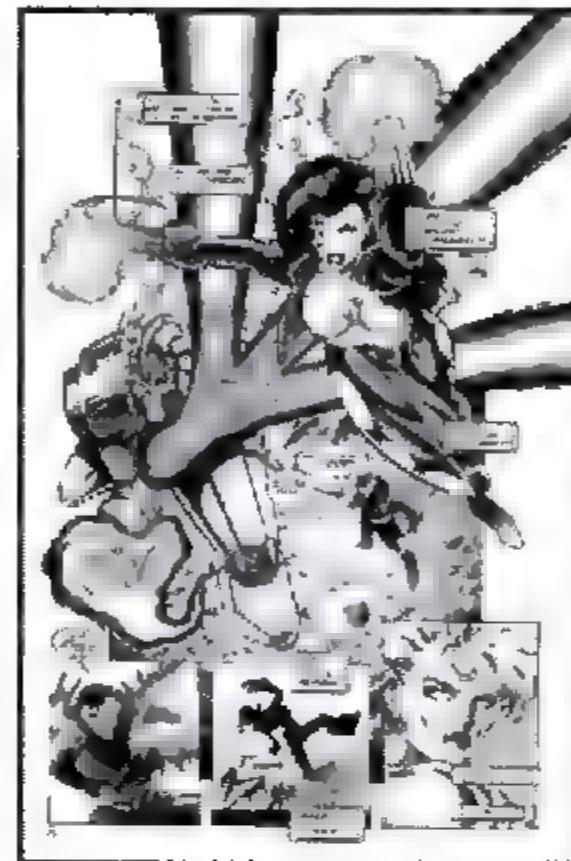
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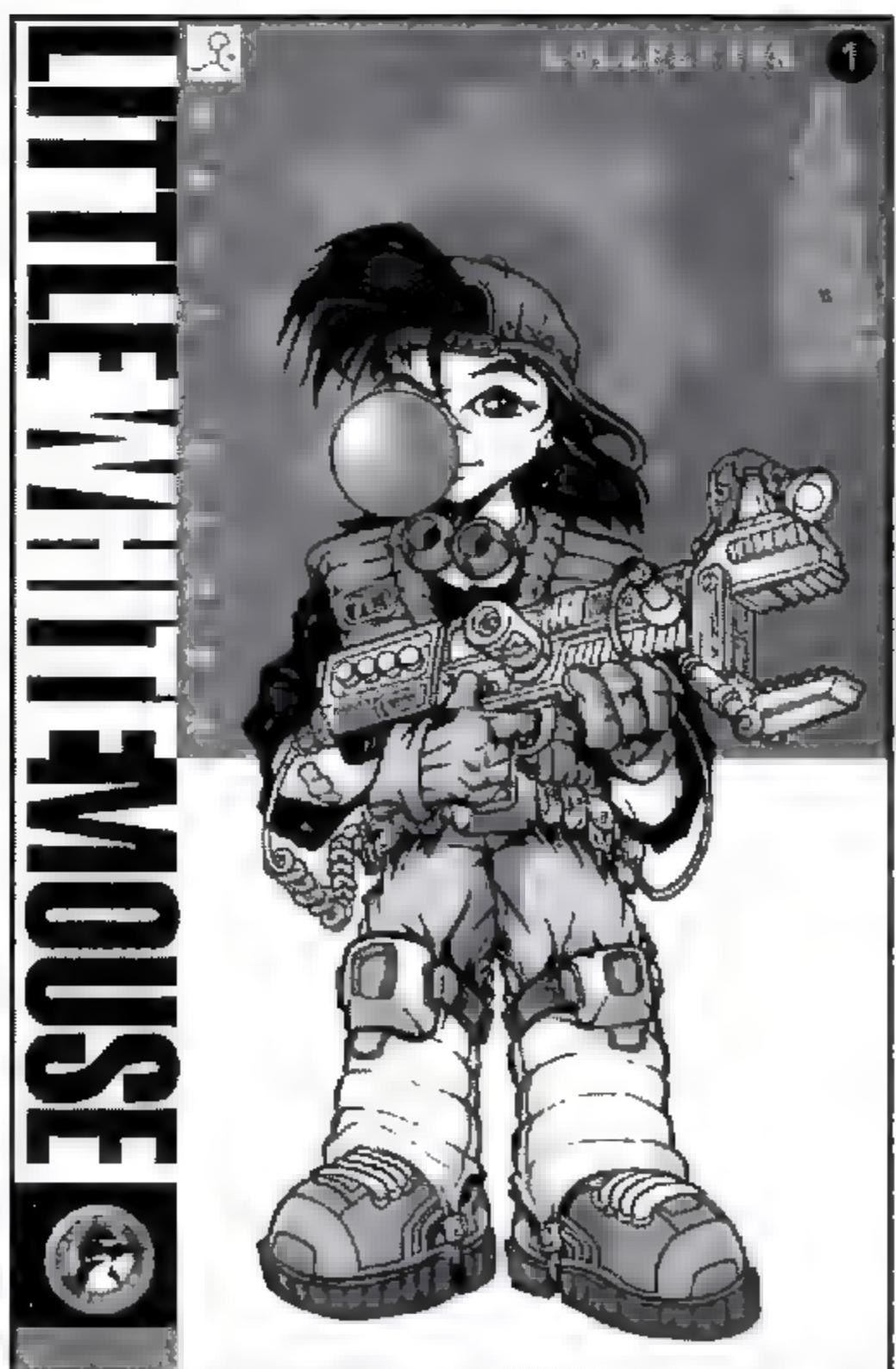
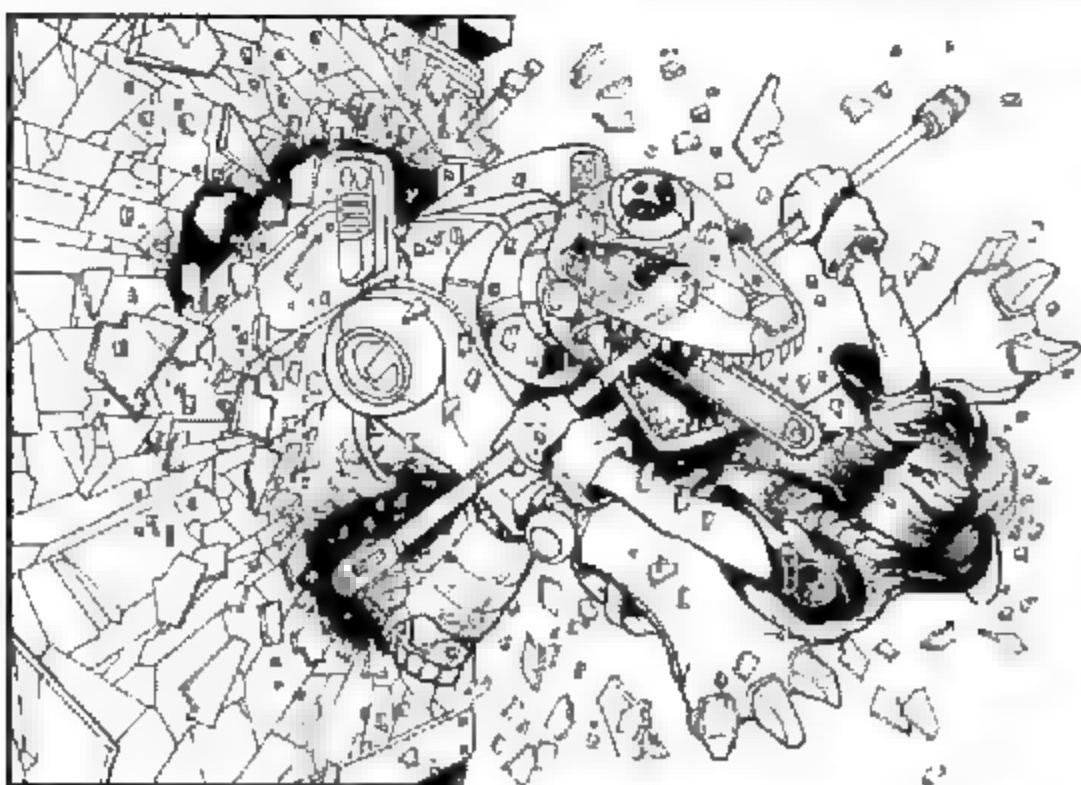


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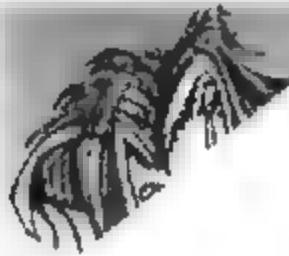


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How to Save the Comic-Book Business

The Universe at Your Finger Tips

Thoughts on Scripting Comic Books

by Tom Bierbaum

I'm calling this column "How to Save the Comic-Book Business," but it should really be called "How Not to Save the Comic-Book Business" for two reasons: 1.) Nobody really knows how to reverse the industry's decline or they'd be out there reversing it; and 2.) Logic suggests most of the things we're trying that we *think* are helping are probably, in fact, part of the problem.

My apologies, by the way, for straying well off the subject of a how-to column on writing comic books, but certainly if any of you aspiring writers out there want to work in the business, it would help to still have a business out there in which to actually work. And if there's one segment of the industry that, theoretically at least, should be addressing what we put out on a conceptual level — envisioning what the comic of the future can be and then making it happen — it ought to be the writers.

I guess what I'm suggesting is this — if we as writers can start challenging certain assumptions and knocking down certain barriers in our own minds, maybe we can help steer comics toward a form that will be more viable and vibrant in the future.

So here's what I think you should remember as you try to save the business, or at least try to stop killing it quite so quickly...

1. Admit There's a Problem.

As they say in the movies, the first step toward solving a problem is admitting you have one, and that seems to be the case right now for the comic-book business.

As the industry has gradually shrunk over the years, there's been a tendency to think that negative talk and gloomy predictions are the real problem and are becoming self-fulfilling prophesies — that accentuating the positive is the best way to help the business turn things around. At times, even mentioning the industry's worsening condition has seemed like an act of disloyalty and sedition. And while it's true that obsessing about the industry's troubles is indeed a way to compound them, ignoring those troubles and their probable causes isn't going to help either.

From what I can tell, overall sales in the industry have dropped by perhaps 50 percent over the past eight years or so, and trying to ignore a downward spiral that serious is foolish, probably even suicidal. If we want there to be a business for any length of time into the future, we certainly better be thinking about what's going on and how it can be changed.

2. Remember Why They Call It "Show Business."

This turn of phrase doesn't work as well for the comic-book business as for show business, but the moral is essentially the same for any creative industry. If there isn't both good creativity and a good business, there won't be a creative business at all. And hard as it is for the passionate people

who mostly populate today's comic-book industry to accept, what's lacking these days probably has a lot more to do with neglecting business necessities than creative necessities.

So as a writer, recognize when it's time to be creative and when it's time to deal with comics as a business. In short, be as creative and indulgent of your own tastes as possible when you control a project and are searching for inspiration. But let your collaborators, your bosses, other people and other companies pursue directions that aren't to your taste. Don't make it your job, as so many in the business have, to try and ridicule, condemn and otherwise kill off the kind of comics you don't like.

Hard as it is to imagine, people like Stan Lee and Curt Swan didn't grow up infatuated with comic books. As near as I can tell, they barely cared about comic books until they stumbled upon them as their professions. At that point, of course, they certainly gave it their very best. By putting a ton of passion and professionalism into their work, but doing it not for themselves but for their readers, they captured the hearts of millions of kids and elevated the form.

Be willing — thankful — to work on comics you yourself wouldn't necessarily be interested in. Don't be afraid to "pay your dues" so that you'll be in a position to someday do exactly the kind of comics you like.

If the business is going to survive, it's got to stop telling people who don't share our taste that we don't want their money. There should be lots of comics that we typical, traditional comic fans wouldn't buy and wouldn't be interested in, because we're a

tiny fraction of the general population. We've got to start making comics that really speak to every person out there who'd be willing to buy a comic book, not just those who are already buying comic books.

3. What the Industry's Been Doing Hasn't Been Working.

The harder we try, the smaller the business gets, so something we're doing must be counterproductive. Thus, before you advocate a certain course for the industry, before you take a view of what a comic book has to be that narrows your creative choices, think about what's been endemic to comics over the last decade versus all the decades before that, and remember that most of what came before the 1990s worked better in a business sense than what we've been doing lately.

Now what exactly have we been doing differently that might be contributing to the industry's woes? If you, for example, think the problem is we've been putting out too many mindless comics that don't challenge the readers, track down a few average, representative comics of the 1980s, 1970s, 1960s, 1950s, 1940s and 1930s — in other words, all those decades when the comics weren't nearly as good but were selling a lot more. I can almost guarantee that those comics will be more mindless and less challenging than a representative comic of the 1990s or 2000s. So does that mean the solution is to make more mindless comics? Not exactly. What I think it means is...



Join me, Dead Kid, in the fight to turn around this business. Together maybe we can get the industry growing again, or at least dying a little more slowly.

4. Any Solution to the Industry's Problems That Involves Making Comics More the Way You Want Them To Be Isn't a Solution At All.

Have you noticed how a lot of politicians respond to a problem by saying we need to do the things they'd want to do no matter what the problem was? There's a budget surplus? Then we should cut taxes. There's a budget deficit? Cut taxes. Economy's in the dumper after the terrorist attacks? Cut taxes. Outbreak of mad cow disease? Cut taxes.

And I think that's how most of the comic industry and fan base are treating the industry's decline. The business is in trouble? Then we need to make more of the kind of comics I want to read and then the customers will just start knocking down the comic-shop doors. It's always tempting to imagine the millions of unsatisfied readers who want exactly what you want and are just waiting for it to hit the shelves so they can start buying comics in hordes. I think that's roughly what the industry's been about in recent decades — passionate comic fans putting out essentially the kind of comics they think are high quality and assuming that's the path to higher sales. In fact, I'm guessing that's the key difference between comics of the last 10 years or so and comics from all those decades before that, when the business was working better. Probably never before has more energy been exerted by creators to please themselves and the vocal fan base, and less energy been devoted to the kinds of comics we creators and the intense fans don't particularly care for.

If you're now buying comics regularly and enjoying some of them, your tastes are being catered to sufficiently. It's that

million or so Americans who are *not* buying comics regularly whose tastes aren't being adequately addressed.

So whenever you hear somebody say, "What the industry needs to do more of is (fill in the blank)," ask yourself if they're filling in that blank with what they themselves want to read. If so, consider the possibility that their proposed solution is really part of the problem.

5. Cool, Edgy, Hip and "In" May Not Be Part of the Solution Either.

It seems like most comic fans of the baby boom generation got hooked on comics to fill some kind of void in their lives — at some point they were lonely, or felt isolated or like they didn't fit in. The people who kept on caring about comic books beyond childhood back then certainly weren't the "in" crowd; they were generally the misfits.

A lot of effort has been exerted in recent decades to reverse that, to make comics something hip and cool and on the edge. It seemed to make sense from a commercial standpoint to try and be the "in" thing among impressionable teens, but has it really worked? Maybe the industry is finding out now that it's largely making comics for people who have no real use for comics. In other words, if you're really cool, hip and with it, what are comics going to give you that you can't get out of any number of other activities?

Maybe most of us don't want to work for a business that caters to misfits and nerds, but it's starting to look like that's more of a real business than one that's trying to cater to the hip, cool crowd.

That's not to say we shouldn't be doing cool, edgy, hip, "in" comics, but it *is* to say maybe we should stop trying to kill comics that are none of the above. As we try harder and harder to be edgy and contemporary, we may be only more intensely appealing to that tiny readership that's still reading comics, and further alienating those millions of people who used to read comics and aren't interested anymore.

6. Comics Aren't Just Super-Heroes.

How many super-hero comics are currently being published a month? 50? 100? 500? That really ought to be enough to satisfy the existing demand for super-heroes.

As a creator, remember there's a whole universe of other possibilities that might bring more readers into the mix, especially females and people whose age, ethnicity, income or education put them beyond the usual comic-buying demographic. Think about ways those alternatives can be explored and push the industry to do it. But...

7. Don't Underestimate the Power and Importance of Super-Heroes.

There are all kinds of comics, but it's hard to think of any genre besides super-heroes that work best creatively and commercially in comic-book form.

Think about it. War comics, horror comics, western comics, Classics Illustrated, fantasy... most types of comics really are second-best versions of movies, TV shows or novels about the same subject matter. But super-heroes are different. Rarely does a movie, TV show or novel do super-heroes better than can a comic book.

The exception could be animation. Arguably, a decent super-hero cartoon works about as well as a decent super-hero comic. And there are other genres that similarly work better as comic books (and animation) than they do in any other form, such as funny-animal stories, silly Archie/Richie Rich-style humor, and various fanciful forms of adventure. Worlds where the visuals are fantastic, colorful and larger than life take well to the media of comics and animation.

So don't feel like super-hero comics are a be-all and end-all for the industry, but also appreciate that there's a reason they've been published without interruption for more than 60 years.

If we can't sell something more than super-heroes, we're probably finished as a business, but if we can no longer sell super-heroes themselves, we're in equally dire straits.

8. Of All the Audiences We've Neglected In Recent Years, One Matters More Than the Rest.

Many of you aspiring writers now trying to break into the business got hooked on comics when you were 15 or older and don't remember a time when there were tons of comics for kids younger than that. You don't remember an era when there were millions of pre-teens reading comics, creating a gigantic pool of potential older readers of more sophisticated comics in later years.

But if, like me, you grew up in the 1960s, you started that decade reading some of the most simplistic super-hero stories imaginable, which probably made you real excited and hungry for the more advanced versions that came along as the decade progressed. However, in the decades since then, those simplistic comics have become harder and harder to find and kids have been getting hooked on super-heroes at an older and older age.

That's led us to a situation today where it's hard to think of a super-hero in any form in any media that's done to tastes below about the age of 13 (which happens to be about the age most of my contemporaries used to outgrow comic books, or started reading them secretly so as not to be exposed as a nerd). Even "The Power Puff Girls," for example, is a cartoon made first

for adult sensibilities, with something included for the kids, rather than a cartoon for kids with something included for the adults. Certainly the animated Batman and Superman Adventures, Lois & Clark, Smallville, Space Ghost Coast to Coast, the Batman movies, the Flash TV series, the X-Men animated series and movie and just about anything else I can think of from about the last 15 years was aimed more at teen and young adult tastes than kid tastes.

Again, nothing wrong with doing super-heroes for older tastes. What's wrong is *not* doing super-heroes for younger tastes. The Superman and Batman serials of the 1940s, the Superman radio show of the 1940s, the Superman TV show of the 1950s, the Batman TV show of the 1960s, the super-hero animation of the 1960s, the Super-Friends of the 1970s, all of these projects excited millions of kids and steered them toward comic book readership. Many of the lifelong comic fans and creators who are older than about 25 can trace their passion at least in part to a childhood fascination with one of those adaptations.

But go back and watch any of the adaptations and almost invariably, you'll find they're dumb, practically unwatchable. That's because they weren't made for you and your adult tastes, they were unabashedly made for kids, and they *worked* for kids. In part because of these silly, lightweight, cornball projects, there was a lucrative business selling super hero comics to kids back then, and there gradually became a lucrative business selling more mature super hero comics to those same kids as they grew older. And it's important to add that, for some reason, virtually none of the well-crafted, more sophisticated super-hero adaptations of the past 15 years generated a significant increase in comic-book sales.

How can that be? My guess is it relates to the fact that in recent years, there've been fewer and fewer young adults who got hooked on simplistic super-hero comics when they were kids, so there are fewer and fewer young adults who are ever going to care about super-hero comics, sophisticated or otherwise.

Nobody gives their heart and their soul to their entertainment the way a young kid does, and nothing sticks with us more intensely through our lives than the things that mattered to us in childhood. If we give up on that juvenile audience — if we're not willing to put out an innocent product that sparks their innocent imaginations — then we give up on what's by far our best chance, maybe our only chance, to generate the adult fans of tomorrow.

I read a newspaper article recently in which a top Marvel official expressed his frustration and confusion at the industry's woes. He challenged readers to sample Marvel comics and tell him they're not consistently of high quality. Why so very few people want to read those high-quality com-



Edgy, dark comics like our "Dead Kid" (pictured here) are great, but when the industry and its fans try to ridicule, condemn and otherwise dismiss comics that are lighter and more innocent, we leave behind lots of potential readers, including some of the most important audience segments of all.

ics was something he was at a loss to explain. And my guess is that sophisticated "high-quality" super-heroes just don't matter to people who haven't grown up on more innocent super-heroes. Why not just read a good novel or watch a serious movie or study Shakespeare? If you didn't care about radioactive spiders and tights when you 10, why in the world would you care about them when you're 20?

So when somebody out there is tearing down a comic because it's too bright, too optimistic, the hero is too powerful or always wins, the bad guys are too comical and not menacing enough, there's no subversive edge, or whatever, remember that without super hero comics like that, there'd probably be very few adults around who care about the "better" super-heroes of today.

9. Just Because You Don't Like It Doesn't Mean It's Bad.

In a truly poetic irony, the elements that most of us in the industry have decided constitute a bad super-hero comic are some of the very elements that make the genre most appealing to young kids. Bright colors, simplistic and silly sounding names, unsophisticated powers that don't make scientific sense, goofy villains, stories with no real tension, heroes who never lose, plot-heavy stories with minimal characterization, inconsistent continuity, impossibly tidy conclusions — most contemporary creators and fans hate 'em all, but kids eat 'em up.

That's not to say, of course, that you can't leave out probably every one of those elements and still put out something kids will read and enjoy. But if you're serious about reaching kids, why not start with what they like best and add in a few touches for older readers, rather than the other way around?

By collectively coming to think of the super-heroes of the industry's first three decades as corny and stupid, we've managed to deny succeeding generations the chance to get hooked on the same kind of

sappy, dopey comics that first ensnared many of us back before we were old enough to know how awful those comics were.

10. Just As You Can't Save the World By Yourself, You Can't Save the Industry By Yourself.

It really isn't your job to save the industry, because no individual or small group of individuals has that power, even if we really did understand what needs to be done.

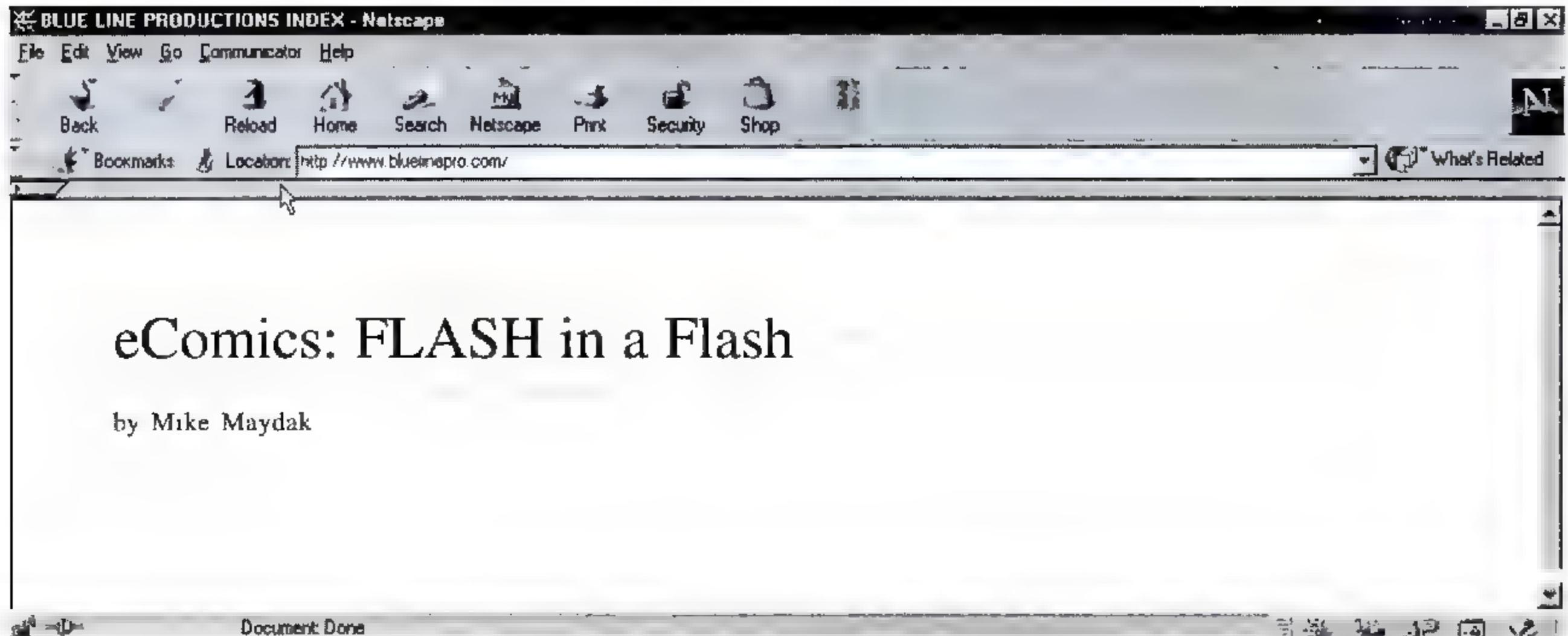
And if my theories hold any water, the need to reach younger readers would require a gigantic commitment by gigantic corporations, since there's no longer the talent, product or distribution in place to connect with that readership. And by the way, those corporations would probably lose money hand over fist for years trying to re-establish a juvenile comics market before such an investment would start paying off in a healthier adult readership. As badly as you, the aspiring creator, may want to address this shortcoming, it's beyond your power.

So don't go into the business thinking you've got to put out the comic book that's going to somehow save the industry. Your job is to get work doing something you do well and enjoy doing, and support yourself as well as you can within the business as it exists.

But what you *can* do to help is get out of the way of everyone else — let them also do what they do well and enjoy doing. If you don't happen to like their stuff, don't condemn and criticize, *congratulate* them for putting out something that speaks to a different audience and just maybe expands the business a little bit.

That'll sure help the industry a lot more than getting rid of the comics we don't like.

Tom
tombierbaum@bluelinepro.com



eComics: FLASH in a Flash

by Mike Maydak

You see it everywhere on the web, eagerly working to capture your attention and increase your online enjoyment. It hides behind your TV set as you watch some of the newest cartoons. It is something that many are not aware of despite the fact that they see it everyday. It is a little something known as Flash - Macromedia Flash to be more precise.

Flash is a powerful software program that has enhanced a wide range of multimedia formats, thus revolutionizing the online experience. The world of online comics is just one of many mediums that have enjoyed the benefits of this program. From interactive menus with sound and graphic displays to eComics with some of the most advanced aspects of storytelling, Flash has made its impact and is here to stay. But where did it come from? Surely it didn't just materialize from thin air.

The history of Flash begins a mere five years ago, though the development was long in the works. Before Flash was around, animation playback for web browsers was done through Java, a computer programming language that left things to be desired in the area of speed. Created by a six-person company, the program, then known as FutureSplash Animator, was used by Disney Online to build animations and the user interface. Shortly, in order to gain more resources to work with, the software was sold to Macromedia and became Macromedia Flash 1.0. Through the years Flash has improved by meeting the demands of its users, and widening the palette for their cre-

ativity. Its current version, 5.0, continues this tradition.

Learning Flash can be somewhat enigmatic. It would seem relatively simple on the surface, but becomes more complex as one progresses and discovers the more advanced techniques and effects.

Flash is a favorite to create animated movies on the Internet. The small file size and quick loading capability make them a perfect match. The small size works well with its ability to stream content, allowing the movie to start before it is finished loading. The flash animated trailers of Marvel.com and the Little White Mouse on bluelinepro.com are excellent examples of this.

Another ability of Flash that has become common on the net is its use to create navigational interfaces. This has allowed you to turn your everyday hyperlinks into visually stunning and sound enhanced animations that respond to your interaction. In addition, drop-down submenus and animated descriptive text further increase the capability of any kind of menus. The web-sites that use Flash can be re-loaded instantly, unlike the HTML based sites that have to reload a web page. In the comic world, these interfaces are commonly seen at sites such as darkhorse.com, crossgen.com, and littlewhitemouse.com.

To view Flash one must have a Macromedia Flash plug-in, which currently has nearly four hundred million users. This plug-in is available for free

at macromedia.com. Besides being used through the web, Flash can be made as a stand-alone projector that runs by itself. What this means is that an eComic designed in Flash can be run from a CD, much like any DVD movie. This feature alone opens up a huge area for comics to be developed for CD.

Flash is available through about any computer software store or catalog. If you get it directly from Macromedia, a full version of the current Flash runs almost four hundred dollars (pending any sale, of course). If seriously interested in the program, be on the look out for any special package deals or sales to get more bang for your buck. If you're a student, be sure to take advantage of your discounts. Most of the time you can save up to 50%.

To use Flash 5.0, your system must have 32 MB of available RAM, 40 MB of free disk space, 256 color monitor with 800x600 resolution, and a CD-ROM drive (Windows 95 or higher for PC and MacOS 8.5 or higher for Macintosh). Basically, if your computer was purchased new in the past few years, you're set.

Flash continues to revolutionize the way things are done, seemingly adding new methods and processes everyday. If you're interested in animation, web design, or any other digitized media, Flash is definitely a must to check out.



MAGIC RUB[®]
1954

The Art of Gravity and The Gravity of Art

by Mitch Byrd

Here are some things to remember when illustrating things and people moving in an environment. The one constant you will have to keep in mind is that gravity effects mass, even when there is a lack of gravity. In the back of your mind should always be the question, "How is gravity affecting this particular object in this specific setting?"

1. Gravity wants to pull mass to the ground

An object's center of mass will have the greatest attraction to gravity. When the object moves in a direction, the attraction that gravity has to the object's center of mass will move in the direction the object is moving.

Standing still, the animal's center of mass wants to pull straight down

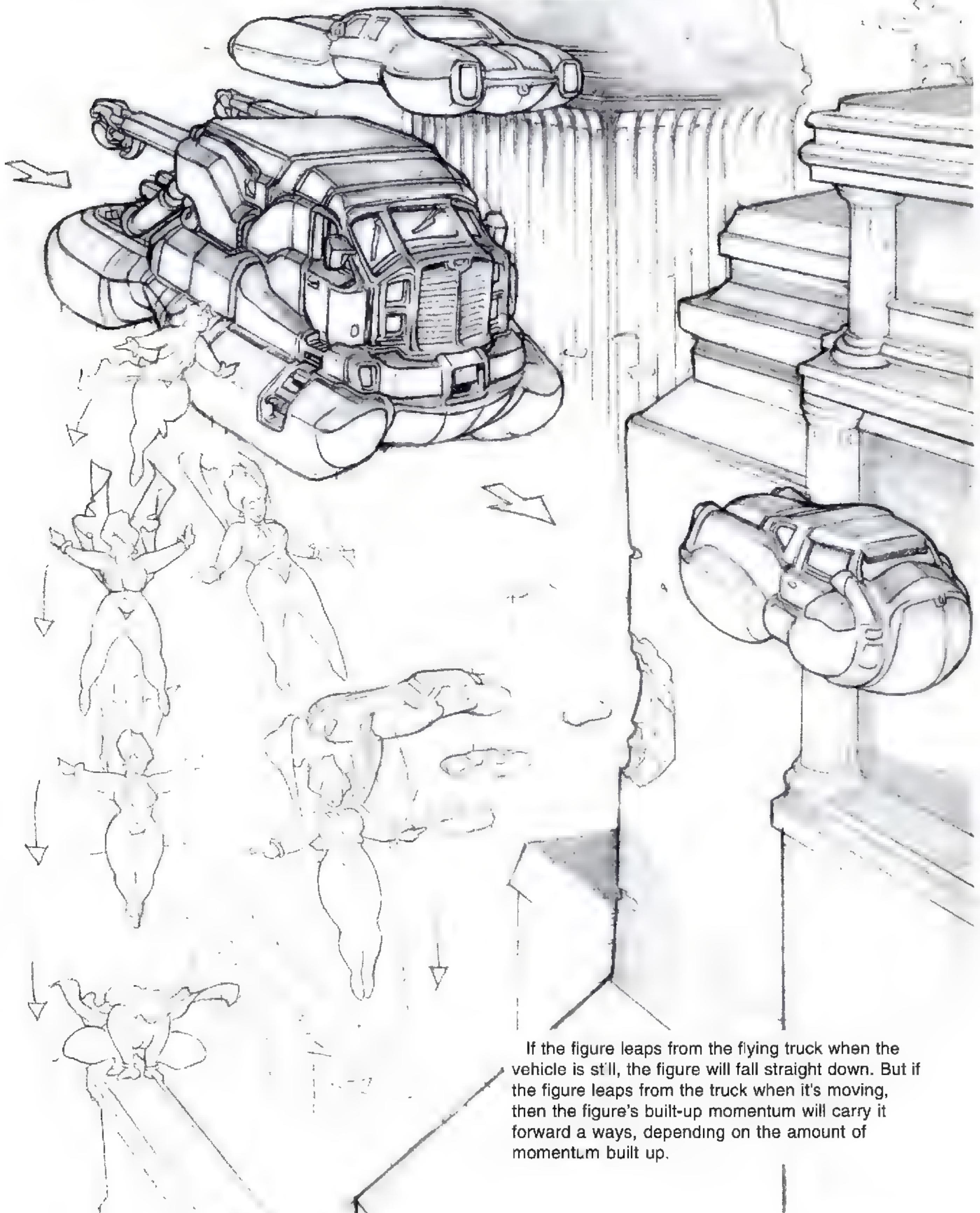


As the animal moves, its mass is going to be pulled toward the ground in the direction of that movement. The animal's anatomy will have to compensate for that pull, as well as providing the forward movement

If the animal does not compensate for the gravity's pull, it will fall down in the direction it was moving

2. Mass plus speed equals momentum

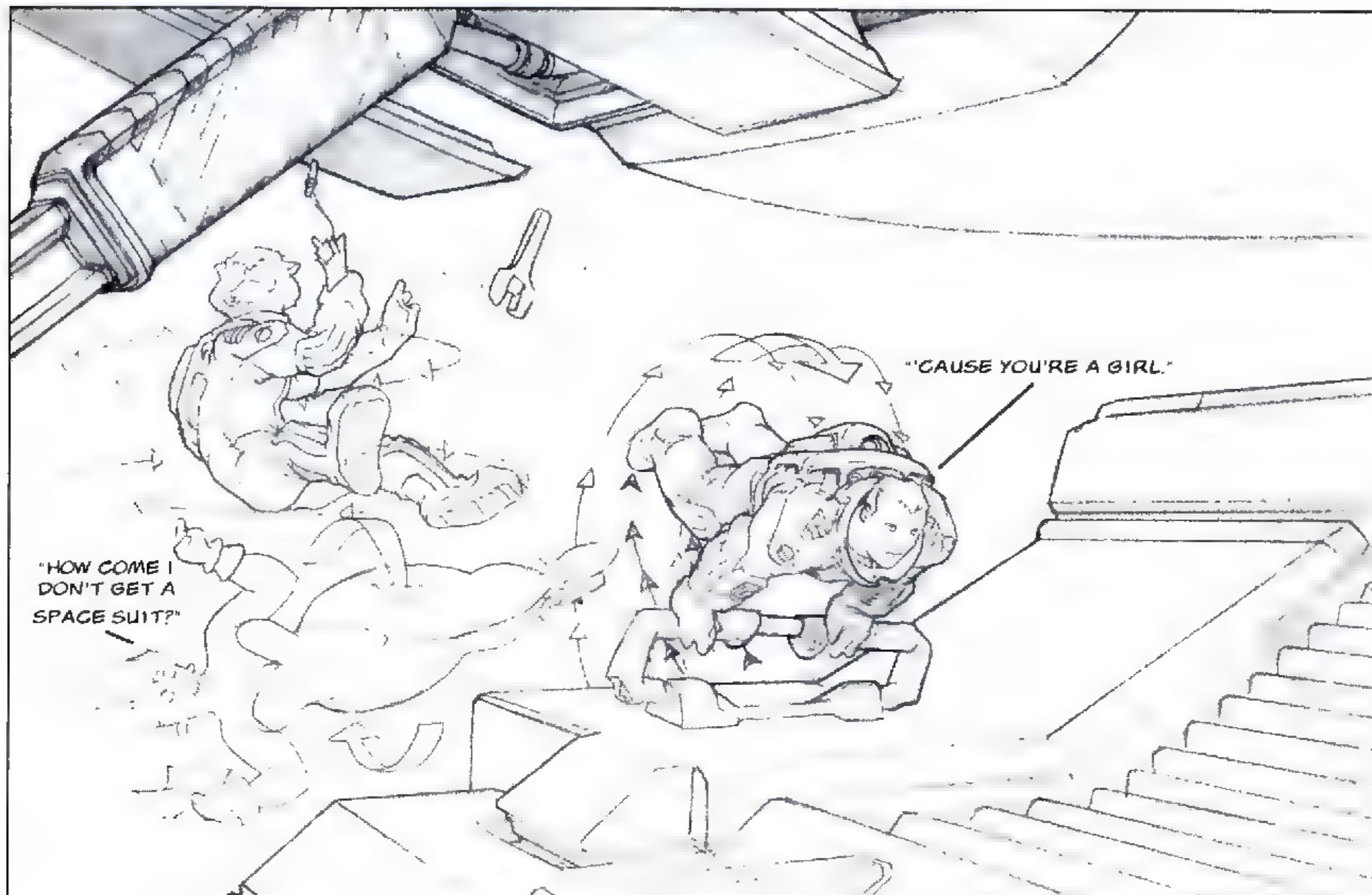
As an object is moving, its mass is accumulating energy in the form of momentum. If the method of speed moving an object's mass is taken away, the energy built up in that mass will still want to move that object until its built-up energy dissipates.



3. No gravity equals independent movement for objects

In a gravity-free setting objects build up momentum with less effort, as gravity is no longer a restraint. If you ever watch astronauts, you'll see they are very deliberate in their movements. They are not moving in slow motion, but rather are just moving slowly. Otherwise, they stand the great risk of moving too fast and bumping into government equipment.

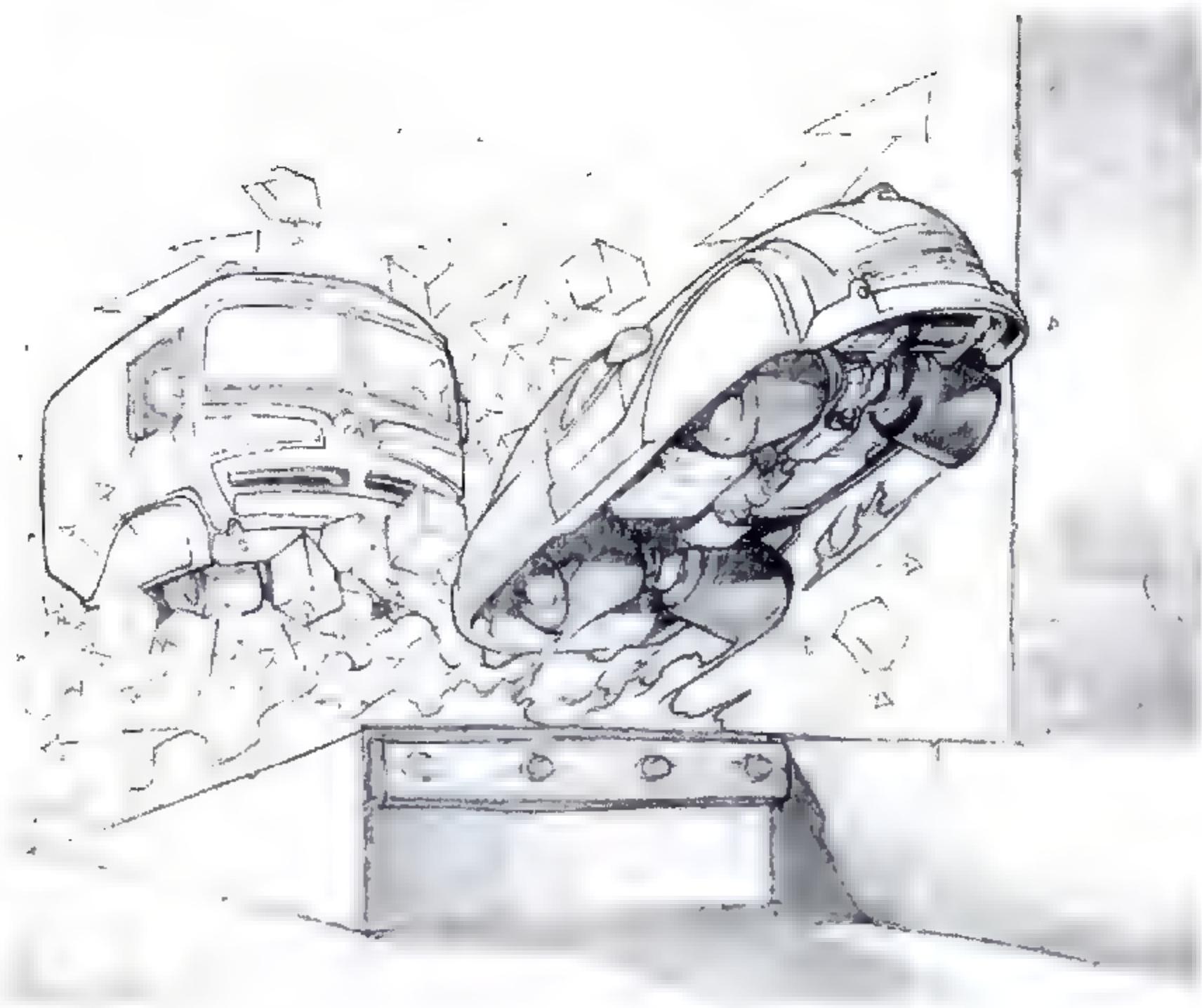
You also must remember that for every action there is an opposite reaction. If one object moves into another object, energy will transfer through those objects and affect their directions.



4. Transferring energy

Once again, for every action there is an opposite reaction. The car and van are moving with a lot of speed which generates a lot of momentum, the energy of which is transferred to the boxes as the vehicles plow through them. That energy transferred to the stationary boxes will move those boxes in independent directions away from the point of contact.

Avoid this lesson in real life. I might be on the sidewalk.



5. Remember! The figure is always compensating for the pull of gravity



When we see a superhero in a fight, he or she is really in two fights: the fight with the villain, and the fight with gravity - unless their super power is anti-gravity.



When the next Olympics are televised, make sure you watch the shot put. It is a clear demonstration of the struggle against gravity and the effects of that gravity on performance.



The athlete wants to throw the shot as far as possible. To do this, he or she must combat the pull of gravity by building up momentum with speed by spinning, and adjust to the center of their mass moving.





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Letters Forum

All letters received will be considered for publication. Letters published will be done so as received in regards to spelling, punctuation, etc. – however, letters may be edited for length, language, and/or other considerations. All letters should be signed by the writer, as well as including the writer's legibly printed name, address, and contact numbers (phone, fax, e-mail). Opinions expressed are those of their respective letter writers, and not necessarily shared by Blue Line. While open as a critical forum, it is blue line's hope and intention that correspondence maintains constructive and positive elements of criticism. Simple name calling, rumor mongering, and/or maliciousness is not of interest. Unless our editor does it. You may send your letters via e-mail to sketchletters@bluelinepro.com.

I faxed an order today for the How to color for Comics books advertised in the latest issue of Sketch. An individual phoned me back in order to inform me that you did not have the item in question. I've been looking for this since I saw it in Diamond, and for some strange reason none of the comic shops in my area could get it for me. Anyway, this individual who called me let me know that there may be the possibility of Blue Line putting out their own version. I feel (and beg) very strongly you to do this, even if it's in pdf format to download (for a price) just from your website. I do not consider myself an expert by any means, I grab all information that I can, unfortunately most of the info that I am finding deals with how people do it themselves, but not a lot of them have been published. I appreciate all of the information that I have gathered, but there are several specific questions which I have yet to find the answers to. I hope that the coloring project that you may be working on can answer them, if not I would still like to have it in order to add more knowledge and tricks to what I am already doing. I originally bought Sketch because of the coloring section that it had (I heard that Chris Riley moved on) and had been a little disappointed that it hadn't been in the last several issues (I do like the fact that a lot of the typos are no longer there). I liked the articles on how the werewolf cover and the Star Wars painting were done, very cool. In the

latest issue there were two articles on coloring (Bio-Techanism poster and Secrets Liquid Coloring Didn't Want You To Know!) that at first glance I thought were visually appealing. It was when I started reading them that I felt they lacked real substance information wise, especially the Secrets article. I read where the techniques were designed for someone who has a good amount of experience with Photoshop, but I didn't feel that the article really told anything that someone with experience wouldn't already know. I'm not trying to cut down or demean the author of the article in anyway, I understand that it's a new article and it takes some time to feel you audience out. It was very well written, my eye could follow the layout of the page quite well, I didn't notice any typos, it had a little humor, and it was informative, I just didn't think that it was informative enough. Oh well, sounds like I'm rambling so it's time to end this letter.

Mitch Ames

Frustrated colorist and really neat guy
Hi Mitch,

I'm sorry the articles were not as informative as you like. We always try to gear our material to a wide range of people, either by having different articles for different levels of experience or having articles with a little something for everyone. Perhaps we are not including as many people as we thought. We'll take it into consideration.

Thanks for the input.
M²

Hello,

This is regarding the article "Secrets Liquid Coloring Didn't Want You To Know" by Aaron Hubrich in Sketch Magazine #9. The use of the Wacom Intuos graphics tablet is mentioned as one of the tools as well as the Adobe PhotoShop. On page 60 in the magazine, you mention using three layers. For the line art layer, is the actual line art or sketch done on the computer using the WACOM tablet or is it done manual and then scanned to the computer. If so, is the tablet just used for coloring and highlighting? I actually just purchased a WACOM tablet. To me it's kind of difficult to sketch my super hero drawings because of the level of detail, muscularity etc...

Thanks

Flexjam :)

That's a good question! I guess you could do line art with the Wacom Tablet - maybe in the future somebody will get that "steady" by being able to draw with it like that. But you'll want to scan in your line art first as a bitmap at 600 dpi. "Res" it down to 300 dpi, change the mode to CMYK or RGB, and then color it using the Wacom Tablet on different layers. So - you'll have your black and white "line art" layer, your "base color" layer, and your "highlight" layer.

And you can also check out previous issues of Sketch to learn how to best get your work into the computer and set it up to color.

Hope this helps!
Aaron

Hey guys,

We just like to thank you big time for being a presence to an up and coming comic adventure company like us. Being able to get our supplies directly from you has been an asset. Not to mention Sketch magazine allows us to know that we have been on the right track all this time.

We hope that one-day you'll be able to see our comics and feel proud that you helped launch two comics that have gotten rave reviews! But now onto the business at hand, we are ready to place our free add for being members of Sketch.

One more thing, your lettering font disk has been a God send. It made doing our comics a lot easier! When is the second one coming out? And we commend you for the bringing the hand models to your line, and finally, thank you for bringing watercolors to you line as well. We do our comics "OLD SCHOOL" and use watercolors, pastels, and acrylics! Hopefully, the acrylics will be the next thing to add! Keep up the good work and we hope to hear from you soon

Sincerely,

Rod and Barbara Jenkins / Kiss Me Comix

P.S. our web site <http://pages.prodigy.net/kiss-me-comix>

Hi Rod and Barbara,

Thanks for the kind words. I hope to see your comic soon. We are always looking to expand the selection of our catalog. If there is anything that you feel should be added, just let us know.

Thanks again,

M²

Hi,

I read a "how to" article you did on how to color art in PhotoShop. After I do all the proper steps there is a white line that borders the line art from the color. Do you know what I am referring to and know of a step I can do to get rid of these lines?

Thank you,

www.pashur.com

This is one of those jobs I wish I could see. But I think I know a

fix...let's hope you have a line art layer that's nice and clean. A trick I do on my color layer lines is: select the actual line itself. Use your Magic Wand Tool and select an area of black. Go to Select/Similar. This will select only the black line art. Next, go under Select/Modify/Contract. I contract the selection 1 pixel. While it is still selected, Copy and Paste this into a new layer - this layer being your color layer. So when the color is applied to the color layer lines, it will be "behind" the original line art layer. Doing this will allow you to make quick fills using the Paintbucket tool. Also, don't get in a habit of resizing things once you start coloring. It will do weird things, and makes the computer think too much about where pixels go. Once you have your line art at the size you want to work at - then, and only then, do you start to color.

Hope this helps!

Awesome question...

Aaron

Mike,

Maybe you can help me out. I saw the book review of "Cerebus: Guide to Self-Publishing" out of Sketch #6. It doesn't say who reviewed it, but I was wondering how to get a copy of the book. If you weren't the one who did, maybe you can check with who ever did. I've searched through just about all of the major bookstore/comics web sites with no luck. I even went as far as to searching for Dave Sim's website, which I guess he doesn't have one.

I appreciate your help,

Chris Hilbig

Hi Chris,

Sorry, but I don't know where to find it. We only have one copy. Honestly, you're not the first to ask. There is a lot of interest in the book but it's been out of print for awhile and no longer available. If I ever get the chance, I'll let Dave Sim know that there is definitely a demand for his book. Perhaps he'll consider updating and releasing it again.

Sorry I couldn't be of much help,
M²

Dear Sketch Guys,

Long time reader, first time writer. First off, I have to commend you for a great interview in Sketch #9. I'm a big Ed McGuinness fan. Secondly, I have to give credit where credit is due. Tom Bierbaum's articles have been great. They're just packed with good information. Have you ever thought about taking them and making a book out of them? It would be like the ultimate guide to comic book writing. My only suggestion is that you might want to look into expanding your subject matter. Don't get me wrong, I love comics but I also love cartoon strips and animations. Honestly, they are all closely related and wouldn't be too far of a jump from comics. Anyway, keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Chaz Bussard
Hi Chaz,

Thanks for the good words. Your right, Tom's articles are very informative. We've been tossing around some ideas about collecting articles and Tom's work has been on top of that list. I like to see it myself. It would be a great collection. As for expanding, we are always looking to broaden our audience. Sketch #11 marks the first issue with an animation article by Sketch new comer Stephen Steinbach. Right now he is just covering the basics for all of us who don't know the first thing about animation? For all you cartoon strip lovers out there, Sketch #12 will feature the monkey boy himself, Liberty Meadows' creator Frank Cho (That's right. Brandy will be in Sketch #12, —repeat— Brandy will be in Sketch #12).

Thanks for the suggestions,
M2

Those stepping up this issue to answer questions:

Bob / Bob Hickey

M² / Mike Maydak

- Flint / Flint Henry

- Aaron / Aaron Hubrich

As always we try to pass the letters along to those of us that have the most knowledge of the subject that your letter is referring to. And, if all else fails we leave it to our most trusted senior editor Flint Henry (That's why he gets paid the big bucks)



Print-On-Demand:

A New Publishing Option for the Less-Than-Affluent Independent Creator

by KLAUS

You've completed your first graphic novel. You've submitted it to publishers both big and small, but the tight market and the high cost of publishing prohibits them from taking a risk on your book. You believe your work has merit, and would gladly publish it yourself... but then you get price quotes from the printers. Ouch. Too steep for a starving artist. You seem to have hit a brick wall.

If the above applies to you, then Print-On-Demand publishing may be an option worth considering.

THE PUBLISHING WARS

A Grossly Exaggerated Tale...

I HAVE RULED FOR CENTURIES....
MY POPULARITY AND RECOGNITION
ARE ABSOLUTE... WHO DARES ENTER
MY DOMAIN AND CHALLENGE ME?



What is "Print-On-Demand?"

Print-On-Demand ("POD" for short—also known as "Printed and Bound") is an extension of electronic publishing. The e-book file is converted and downloaded to a machine that prints, cuts and perfect binds the paperback or hard cover version of the book, thus producing a physical product, ready for sale.

POD machines are not universal; some are large million-dollar models that work at high speed, and others are about the size of an office photocopier. They all, though, exist for the single purpose of creating high-quality books cheaply.

Advantages of Print-On-Demand

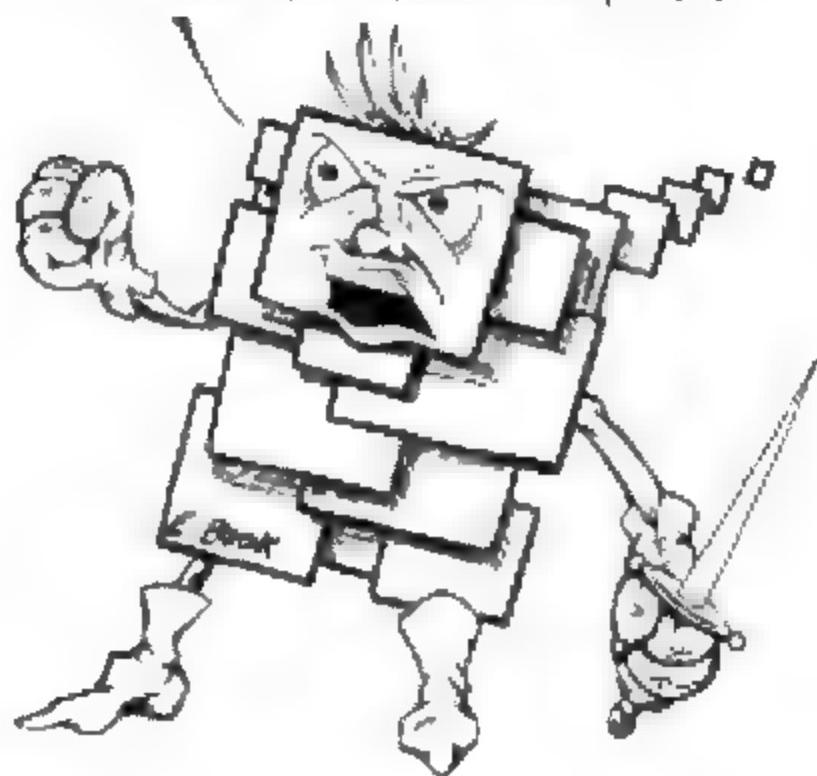
With traditional printing, you pay for a predetermined number of copies of your

book, which must be stored. Your main goal at that point is to make your money back by selling as many of those copies as you can.

With POD there is no pre-printed stock of your book, thus no massive up front cost. When someone orders a copy of your book it is printed at that time, especially for them. And, because your book can be printed in unlimited numbers, it will never go out of print.

The books produced via POD are not low-quality photocopies as some may suspect. They are printed on the same paper stocks traditional printers use, and the actual image quality itself compares favorably with most books you find on the shelves of bookstores and specialty shops.

IT IS I, CHAMPION OF THE ELECTRONIC REVOLUTION!
I AM SUPERIOR! I CAN TRAVEL IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE!
AND I'M CHEAPER, TOO!



HAH! YOU FALL WITH LITTLE EFFORT! GO BACK TO SCHOOL, INFANT--YOU ARE VANQUISHED!

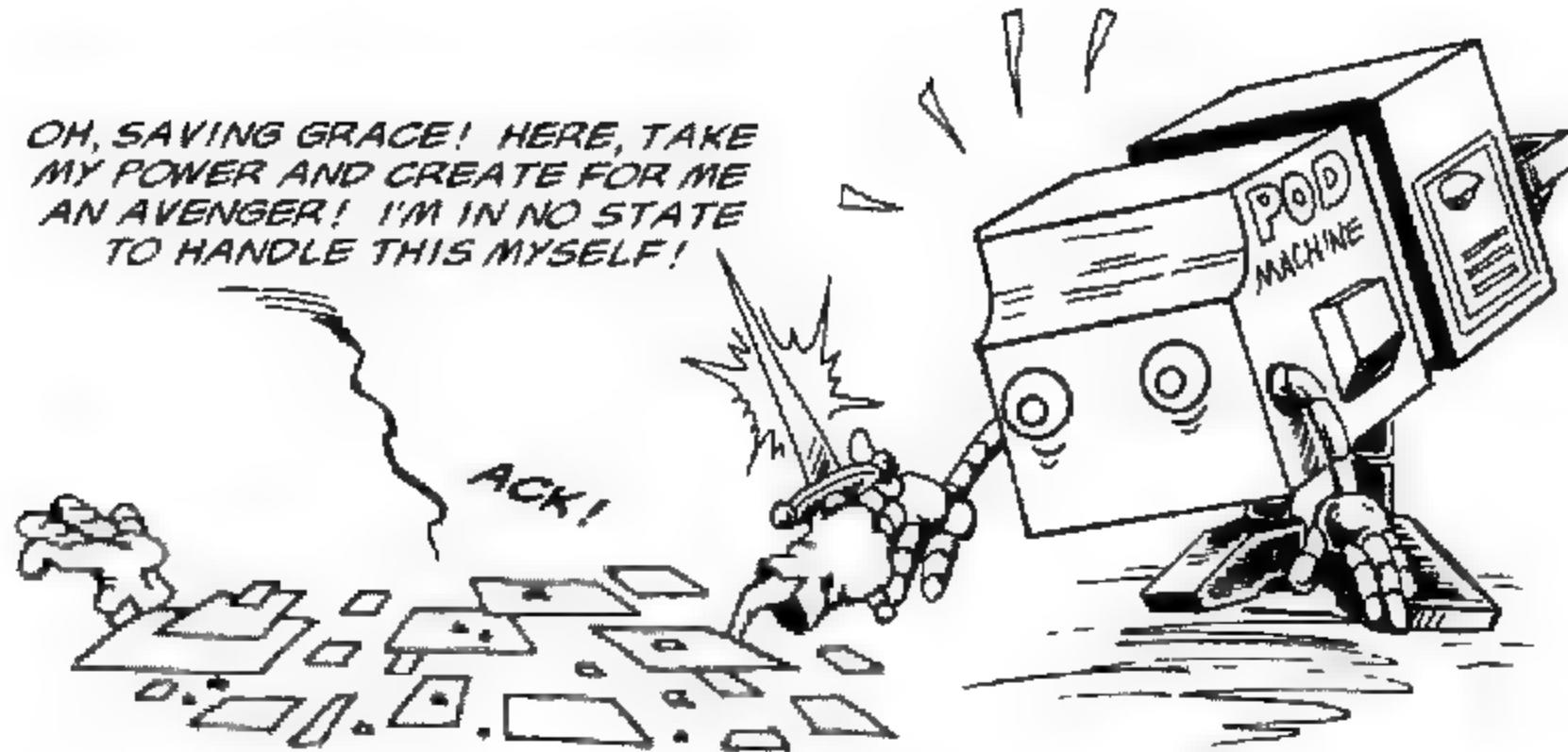


Reasons to consider Print-On-Demand publishing

The graphic novel format is growing in popularity and is beginning to reach a wider, non-comics reading audience. Even the big publishing houses have shown interest in good work as of late. Chris Ware's *Jimmy Corrigan, The Smartest Kid on Earth* is a recent example of this, having been published in a truly impressive hard cover edition by Pantheon Books. With POD you won't have the backing of the "big boys," but you'll have the ability to reach a much wider audience.

Another advantage of POD is that it allows you to test market your title. Instead of taking a huge monetary risk printing a few thousand books only to find out it's a

OH, SAVING GRACE! HERE, TAKE MY POWER AND CREATE FOR ME AN AVENGER! I'M IN NO STATE TO HANDLE THIS MYSELF!



bomb, POD allows you to make a relatively small financial investment to have your book available to the public. If you find that word of mouth is good, you receive critical acclaim, or that your sales are strong enough, then considering a traditional print may be more feasible. This may decrease your chances of taking a big hit to the wallet.

Drawbacks to Print-On-Demand

Since you have no physical stock of books, then you won't have copies on the shelves of bookstores and specialty shops. POD is supposed to eliminate returns of unsold product.

You can get past this on the local level by approaching local shop owners yourself. Many stores like the draw of "local talent." On a national/international level, the Internet is a good place to start in publicizing your book. Sending out press releases, getting copies out to reviewers, and starting word-of-mouth campaigns are good ways to get the exposure ball rolling.

The consistency of your book's print quality may go up and down over time, and your readers and customers will complain to you, not the printer. This is not unusual in any form of printing. Print quality and consistency varies widely in the traditional publishing arena as well. At least with POD, you're not buying in bulk.

At this point, POD has not been used extensively for comics. The technology is almost exclusively utilized to produce "standard" text-filled novels and books. But this does not mean that producers of black and white graphic novels should look elsewhere. Quite the contrary—POD seems almost tailor made for comics for all the reasons listed above. Right now, the name of the game is bending the existing options to fit your individual needs.

Some final comments

It's the Computer Age, but folks still want their paper books. Print-On-Demand is

the serpent eating its own tail and asking for salt and ketchup. E-books sought to challenge the dominion of printed books—and have, up to this point, failed to do so. To stay in business the e-publishing houses adopted a fledgling technology known as POD, completing the publishing circle with an old familiar form presented in a new, cheaper way.

Publishing industry types are speculating that in the future all books may be printed this way. Plans are in the works to install POD devices into actual bookstores, thus enabling retailers to supply the public with copies of your book in a matter of minutes, instead of days.

Is this just more e-hype? Maybe not. The costs of traditional publishing continue to soar. And too many unsold books equals not only a loss of your nest egg, but the sad legacy of thousands of trees that gave their lives in vain for art. This could be the new wave of publishing that the promise of e-books failed to keep.

And this could mean the difference between success and obscurity to those with tons of talent and skill, yet little money to invest. It could be the "great equalizer" some of us seek.

Some resources to get you started

Just as the printing facilities for POD vary, so do the publishing plans that are available. At one end of the scale some

plans offer distribution deals, press kits, securing of copyright, procuring of ISBN number and/or bar code, and publicity packages. At the other end of the scale some companies just print the books, period. More electronic publishers are offering POD than ever before, so take the time and do some research.

I've not studied many of the following resources in great depth. I list them here to aid in your search for the plan that fits your particular vision. As with any internet endeavor, if you have any questions about the legitimacy of a company, contact the Better Business Bureau and have them check it out.

Happy hunting.

Run an Internet search on your favorite search engine for "Print-On-Demand". This usually yields many listings for you to peruse.

- <http://www.instabook.net>
"InstaBook Corporation"

Offers the use of POD machines with publishing deals.

- <http://www.docunetworks.com>
"International On-Demand Printing"
- <http://www.trafford.com>
"Trafford Publishing"
Just one of many POD publishers.
- <http://www.1stBooks.com>
"1stBooks Library"

Where our "visual novel," *SUPER GRAPE: Going Nowhere in a Big Way*, is published. Offers e-book publication as well as POD.

KLAUS is the author and co-illustrator of SUPER GRAPE: Going Nowhere in a Big Way. He is currently working on the second book in the SG saga, which is projected for completion in late 2002. He can be contacted via his web site: <http://www.klausandfigg.com> or e-mail: mygrain@wahooemail.zzn.com.

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Animation Basics 101: The Bouncing Ball

by Stephen Steinbach

Animating a bouncing ball is one of the most popular and simple exercises you can do to help you learn how to animate. Because of its simplicity, this exercise is a good place to start if you have never animated before.

The bouncing ball covers two fundamental principles animation: "squash & stretch", and "arcs."

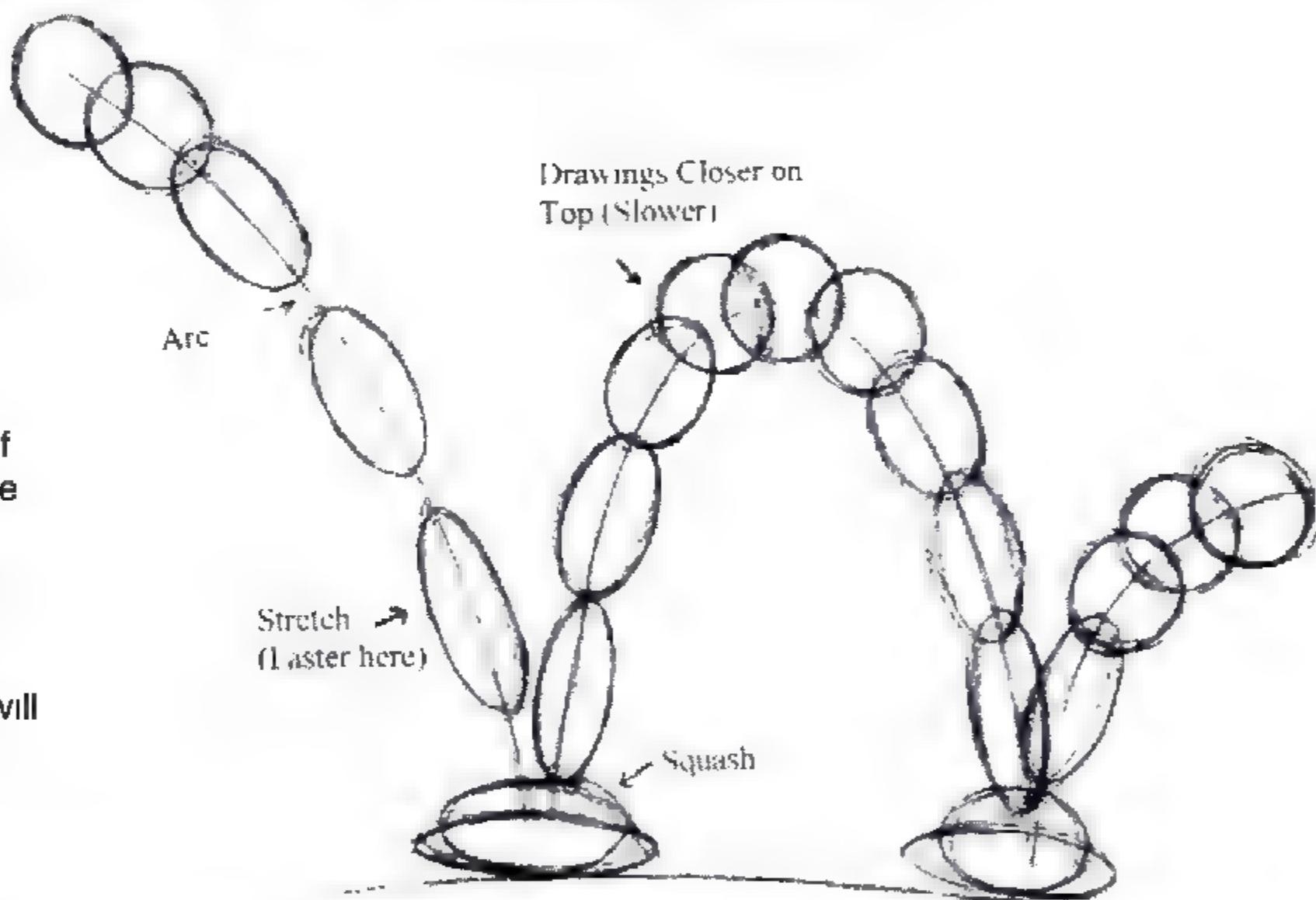
Before we understand what squash and stretch is, we must learn some basic technical information about animation and timing.

2D Animation, for the most part, uses a frame rate of 24 frames per second. In other words, it takes 24 drawings for 1 second of animation. However, you can reduce your drawing count from 24 to 12 if you shoot each drawing twice instead of once. Shooting each drawing twice is called "shooting on 2's." Shooting each frame once is called "shooting on 1's."

Most of the time shooting on 2's is preferred, because you only have to draw 12 frames per second instead of 24 frames. However, it does have its drawbacks. Having a slower frame rate will make your animation look less smooth than a faster frame rate. Adding "stretch" will help compensate for a slow frame rate.

An example of stretch would be a photograph of a moving car. The slower the film speed, the more the photo will look blurred, or "stretched." The faster the film speed, the sharper your photo will look.

Therefore, in regards to the bouncing ball; the faster the ball moves, the more stretch your ball will have to compensate for the slow frame rate.



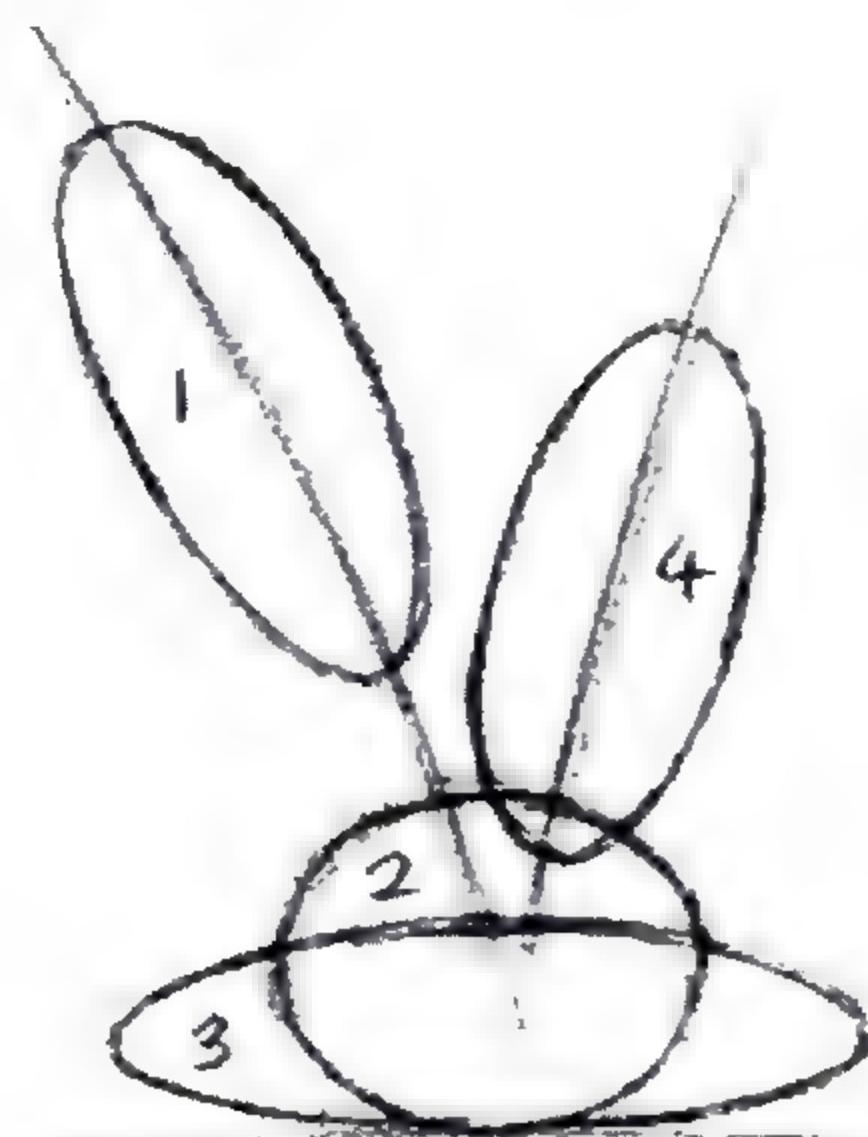
Notice that the ball will follow a basic arc (fig 1). As the ball picks up speed, the ball becomes more elliptical. As the ball moves to the top of the arc, the drawings are spaced closer and the ball is rounded. Make sure that the basic volume of the ball is consistent throughout your sequence.

When the ball touches the ground, the ball will squash (fig.2.) Notice that the squash of the ball is equal on the top and bottom. If you squash the ball only on the bottom it will look like a water balloon or a deflated tire. The ball should stay on the ground for at least two frames, depending on the type of ball you are animating.

Different balls bounce differently. The timing and arc of the bounce will help describe what type of ball you are animating. A golf ball bouncing on concrete will look different than a soccer ball bouncing on grass. Generally, the larger the ball, the slower the movement, hence more drawings. A beach ball would fall slower and with less stretch than a bowling ball, though a bowling ball would not squash as much on the ground due to its hardness. Every type of ball has its own characteristics.

Before you begin your animation exercise, spend some time observing bouncing balls from real life. Analyze how many times different balls will bounce before they stop. Observe their speed at impact. Remember that animation is the illusion of real movement. It is always important to observe from real life before you animate.

"I observe, therefore I animate."



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BOOK REVIEWS



UNO FANTA

by Ashley Wood

Published by Idea + Design Works, LLC
\$29.99 hardcover, 96 pages.

When scouring the web, one can confuse the awe-inspiring images of Ashley Wood the model with the awe-inspiring works of Ashley Wood the artist. Both are beautiful in their own right. Both know how to use curves and angles to achieve a desired effect. Both are involved in the commercial field, trying to convince consumers with the appearance they produce. They are both artists, seeking to continue to enjoy what they do.

But once the observer takes a more in depth look, the difference becomes clear as day. The emotions induced by the work of the Ashley Wood the artist would make Ashley Wood the model wrinkle in discomfort. Through his use of his diverse skills with a variety of mediums (watercolor, oils, pen and ink, digital imaging, etc.), the Australian born artist Ashley Wood has produced images that are synonymous with the dark side of human nature. This theme has made him a perfect match with such dark tales as Spawn, Ghost Rider, and Shadowman to name a few.

In his first ever art book collection, UNO FANTA, Ashley Wood lets us into his world for a raw look at his creative process with over 90 pages of glossy, full color photo quality images, most never before seen and especially created for this book. His unique style and elaborate sketches can easily blow one away on the themes of death, sins, loneliness, and many other aspects of life we dread and keep in the background of our minds.

Ashley Wood has been part of comic industry, as well as others, for nearly a decade. He has worked for every major comic publisher in America and England with such creators like Paul Jenkins (Inhumans, The Incredible Hulk) and Garth Ennis (Preacher, Punisher), created art for movies and television, and worked with world-renowned recording artists. His credits are included with titles like Sam and Twitch, Judge Dredd Megazine, and Deadside, as well as those already mentioned.

Though there is no table of contents or obvious order to this book, the images are seemingly grouped together by the feeling they induce. There is an excellent illustrated section on the seven deadly sins as well as my personal favorite; a kitty + bot section, a cluster of images depicting, in my opinion, a lonely and out-cast robot with his faithful follower kitty. This is merely a sample of what is contained in these pages. The material used to construct this book is top of the line, giving you a great feel in your hands when you're going through it.

In the same sense, the book's material also creates one of the very few downfalls to this book. The glossy photo quality pages are heavy with smooth ink, which leads to any handling causing,

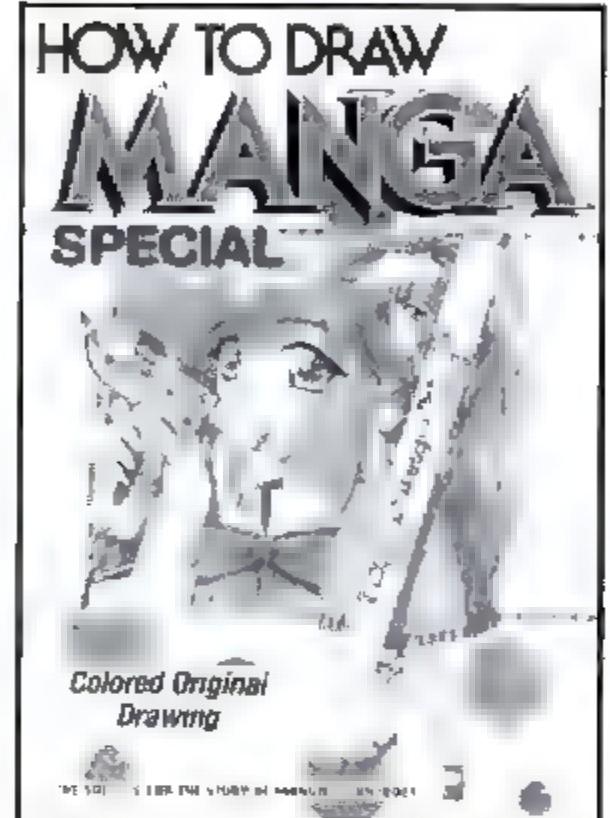
what I call, finger bends. The pages are almost brittle to the touch. Now I know that this is no problem for many, including me, for a well worn book is a book that is well loved. I just wanted to mention this for those who are concerned about such things. Also, the price, \$29.99 for 96 pages, can be pretty steep for some, though totally understandable concerning the quality of material used for the book.

Overall this book is not for the weak stomached or younger audiences, it's definitely for mature viewers and open minds. Ashley Wood's work is, in some sense, revolutionary. His unique approach to artistic expression is exciting to view. Though no longer with Todd Mcfarlane Productions, one has the sense that we will see Ashley Wood in the very near future. I personally can't wait to see what he does next.

HOW TO DRAW MANGA SPECIAL: Colored Original Drawing

by The Society for the Study of Manga Techniques

published by Graphic-sha Publishing
\$26.95 soft cover, 118pgs of color and b&w illustrations



In today's world of digital coloring there doesn't seem much room for the hand coloring techniques of old. Some would go as far to say that the way of the marker is an extinct dinosaur. Well, that is where they are wrong. With quality marker brands such as Prismacolor and Copic, hand coloring is still alive and kicking. The art of hand coloring, uniting the mind, body, and color in one, is somewhat magical.

With this in mind, the Society for the Study of Manga Techniques has continued their renowned series with HOW TO DRAW MANGA SPECIAL: COLORED ORINGINAL DRAWING. In this volume you will find an overview on how to use Copic markers, and tutorials on various marker techniques that are applied in the field of manga as well as other styles.

Through use of both comic stories and visual step-by-steps, you learn the terminology and do's and don'ts of hand coloring. With an extensive review on proper materials and maintaining your tools, you will have all the advantages of a professional. The tips on shading, blending, strokes, and layering uncovers the mystery behind the color of manga. With additional sections on airbrushing and applying other art mediums, this book contains nearly all one would want to know about hand coloring with markers.

My only "beef" with this book, which also applies to many of the other How to Draw Manga books in this series, is their unnecessary use of suggestive female poses and figures to demonstrate artistic concepts. I understand that sex sells, but is it really necessary to use the example of a sleeping half-naked girl to show how to use a blender? I admit that most of these images are innocent by nature and seem rather harmless, it's just that it seems there would be more people interested in "how to manga" than just teenage boys.

Despite some of the drawbacks (based mainly on my opinion), this book is definitely worth the \$26.95 price tag if you're interested in taking up the marker medium. So turn that computer off, you have coloring to do.

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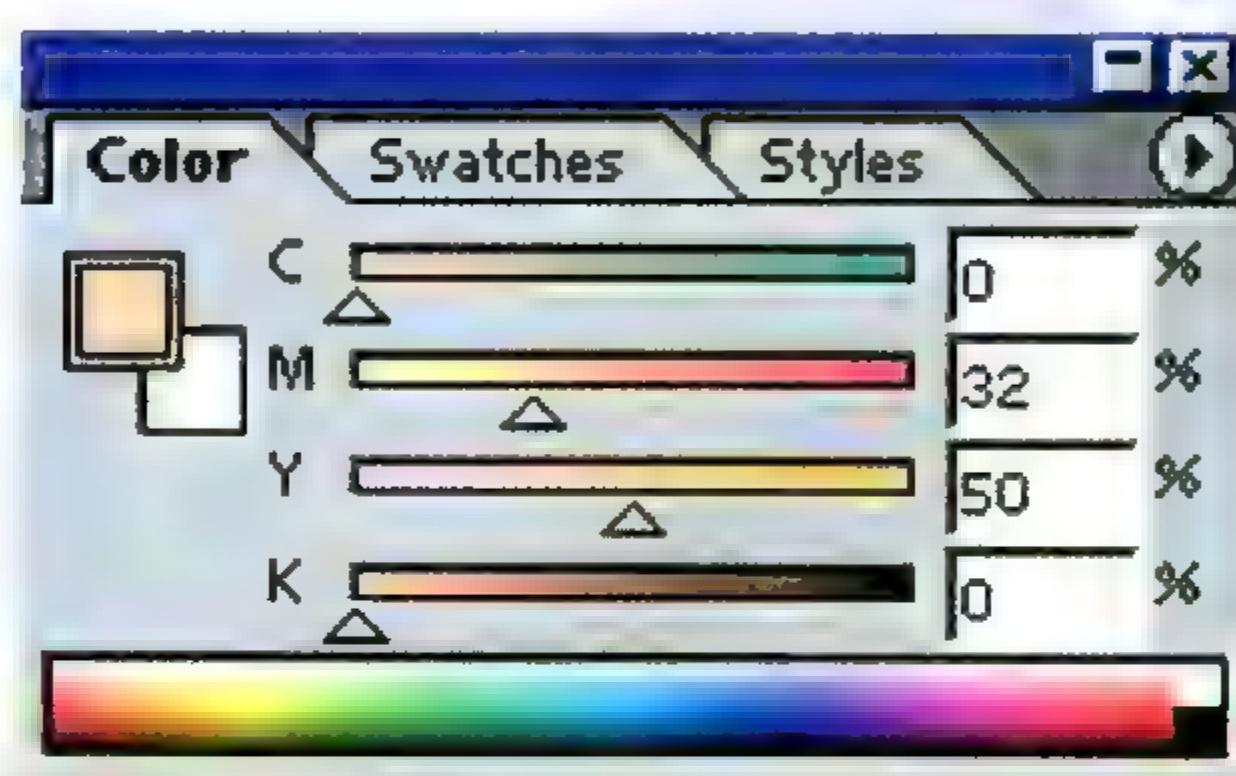
BEAU SMITH KEVIN HARDY
MITCH BYRD RYAN OGAWA

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE A 5-PAGE PREVIEW OF **THE BELIEVER**



Digital Coloring: Setting Up Your Color Palettes

by Aaron Hubrich



Photoshop's Color Menu.

I think if you took a poll, most people would think color comics are the way to go. They're more expensive to produce, but it really does make what would be an average book – above average. Imagine the stack of flashy books out there without that dramatic computer color – "BORRRRRING!", as Homer Simpson would say. That color is what sets those books apart from the rest.

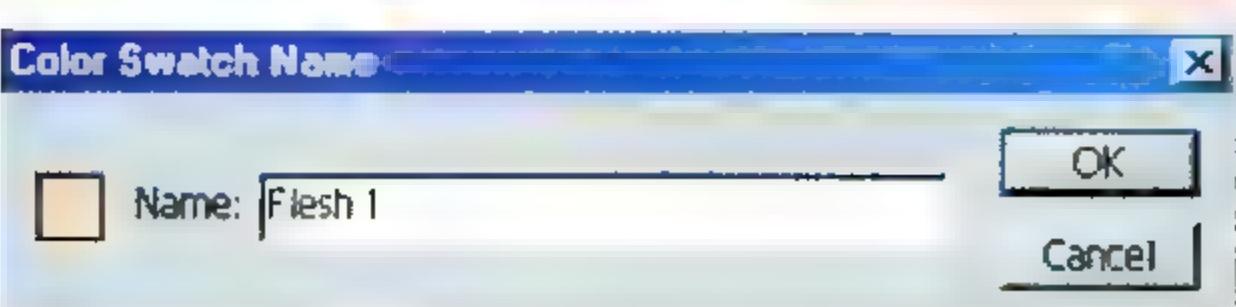
The fine folks that make this all possible have a wide range of color palettes made to suit their needs. These custom-made color palettes allow you to dial in exactly what color will work for any situation that comes up. Don't be satisfied with the "out of the box" choices that Photoshop has – make your own now! Here's how...



Photoshop's Swatch Menu.

Open up Photoshop (the "real man's" coloring program), and go to "Window", then to "Show Color". This Slide Bar alone will allow you to get the exact color you want, but it's a pain to have to keep going back and messing with getting that color again and again. Each of these bars represents the percentage amount of CMYK color that will be applied. If you want to save it, tab over to the next setting – "Swatches." Here you will see the base swatch choices that Photoshop users have come to expect.

Not this time! We're going to get exactly what WE want! Click on the button in the top right hand corner of the window. There will be an option to "Add Swatch." Click on that, and another window will appear allowing you to name your new swatch. You also have the option to double click on the color to fine-tune your swatch in the "Color Picker" window. Here it will give you the option of playing with the color a bit more. It will also let you know when your color is out of the CMYK color range.



Photoshop's New Color Swatch Menu.

For those of you who don't know: CMYK is the color range that a printer can use. RGB is suited for your monitor or TV, and has a much larger range of color choices. Remember, even though you might like those RGB col-

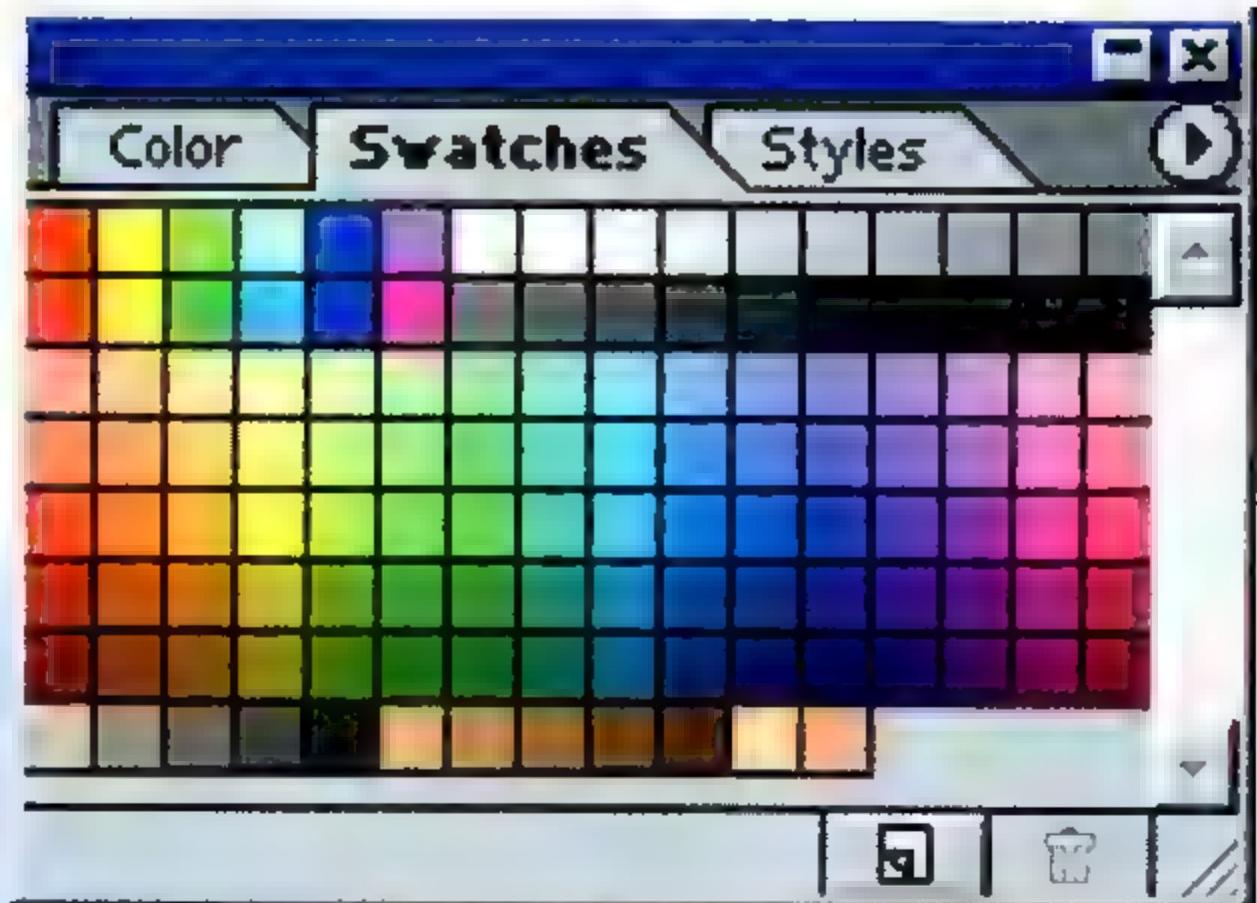


ors, that doesn't mean it's going to reproduce when it goes to print...Don't say I didn't warn ya! I could go into a gruesome amount of detail concerning the CMYK vs. RGB debate, but it wastes a lot of time – and unless you really want to be a printer, I wouldn't concern yourself too terribly much about it. But I will tell you – please only work in the CMYK color mode if you plan on printing your work on paper.

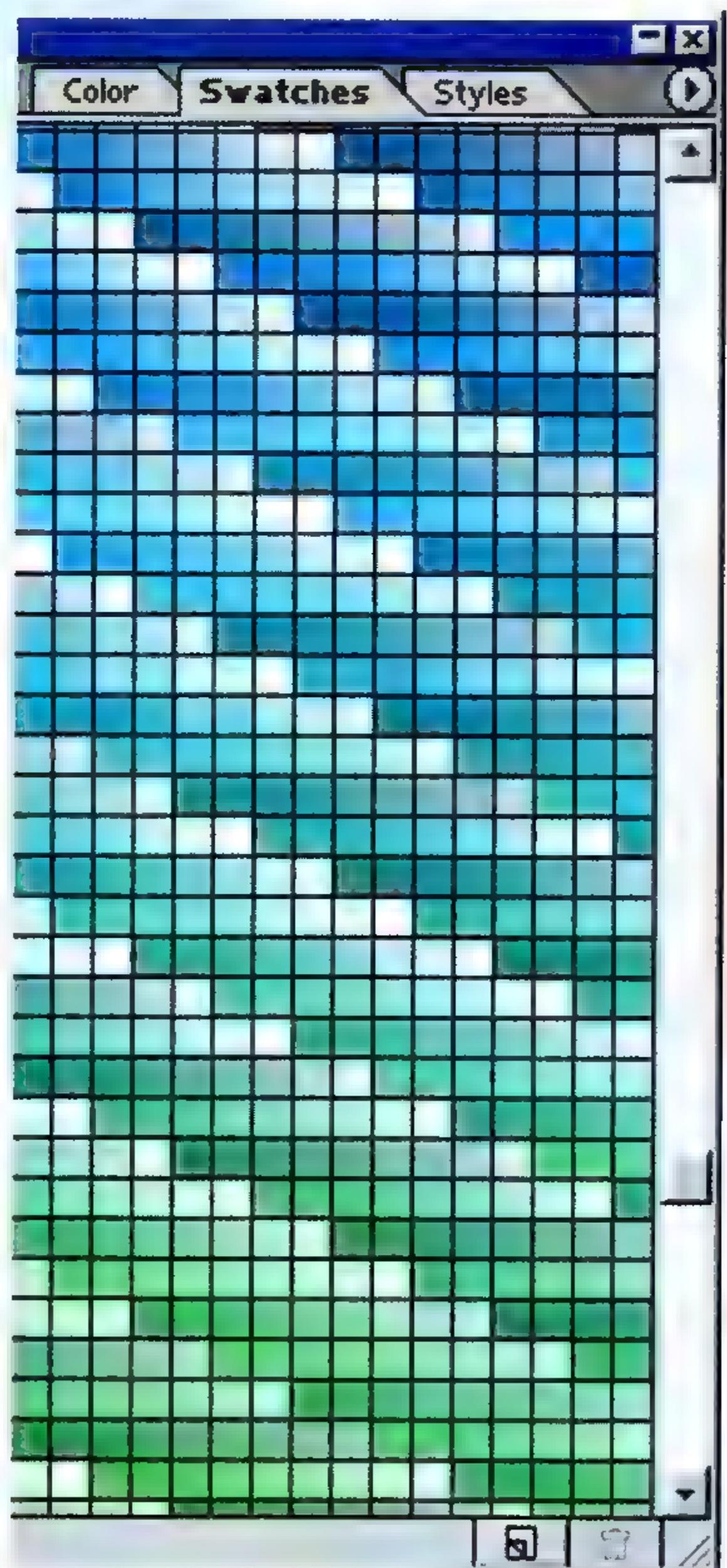
Now that you have your own personalized swatches picked out, why don't we mess around a bit? Let's load up some color palettes that Adobe makes available for Photoshop. If you go into the same window where you can make a new swatch, you'll notice that there is a place to load a new swatch library, or it may already be listed in that very same window depending on which version of Photoshop you have. You may have to load the swatches from the Folder in which your program is stored. So go to your C drive, Program files/Adobe/Adobe Photoshop/Goodies, then to Color palettes. That should get you there. You can choose from "Web Friendly" to "Pantone." The World Wide Web likes the RGB Web Friendly colors. Don't even think about using these Web Friendly swatches if you plan on printing. The web page gurus can have it!

I like the Pantone Process swatches myself. Pantone is a popular color mix guide that many people use as a standard. What this means is: Joe gives you a call one day and says, "Hey Bob! Can you make Superfreak's boots Pantone #345? Thanks!" Joe is probably looking at a color guide, and is able to know that when he calls for a certain Pantone color, it will be accurate when the comic book is printed. The majority of these colors will print very close to what you see on your screen. If you use this color choice as your main palette, it should be just fine.

Have fun with the wide variety of choices of color you can make for yourself. Just be aware that there are limits to what a printer can print, but if you do all your new swatches in CMYK, you'll be just fine.



Photoshop's Swatch Menu with New Flesh Colors available.



Photoshop's Pantone Process Swatch Menu.

Grating Expectations

I don't know how things will be by the time you read this. I do know that there will have been an end to a season in America that I've been lucky enough to have enjoyed all my life. By the time you've knocked this issue of *Sketch* off the racks, you might even be tired of reading of the September 11 WTC terror attack and all its resultant situations. But you'll undoubtedly have plenty of images from the events firmly in your memory. Many of these will be sad and horrible, but my wish is that these will have been outnumbered by images of heroism and hope.

During times of war, the power of imagery to impact seems to grow. Has *Guernica* come to your mind over the last few months? World War 2 produced genuinely amazing propaganda art on both sides. Tom Lea produced paintings filled with as much pathos and hyper-reality as almost any photo from time of crisis or conflict. You're a creator with plenty of thoughts, feelings and opinions. Beyond doing something more practical – donating blood, money, or time – did these incredible events prompt you creatively in any way?

I produced nothing great or of importance, but I hadn't intended to produce *anything*. However, after seeing shots of saddened-beyond-despair New York faces, a bound and butchered stewardess, children of servicemen and women as they wished their parents goodbye, and a trip to the RAWA site, I was surprised to find that I had: splash roughs of selected super-types doing up hordes of Taliban in violent fashion. Comic violence on a Schomburgian scale if Paul Verhoeven was art director. Nothing more than simplistic dreams of retribution, stuff that many comic people would look down their noses at derisively (but then, Politically Correct is one of the few things in my life I'm glad I haven't been called). The drawings did nothing, except, perhaps, provide some release for my personal anger. Did you create – write or draw something in response to the situation – either as commentary or catharsis? Did anyone see what you produced? If so, what was their reaction; were they affected by your work?

I hope everyone has gotten a look at Marvel's *Heroes*, a book filled with some terrific and thoughtful contributions. While channel-surfing I was lucky enough to catch a few moments of a TV news piece concerning it and see a New York service man tap a page of *Heroes* and say, "This one gets framed." The page was an image of service people, an illustration by the wonderfully talented comic legend Mr. Tom Palmer.

What a great thing, to be able to touch this serviceman – a gentleman who looked as though he'd seen his share of the reality that Mr. Palmer's illustration was in tribute to. Images. Images and stories. Comics embody visual storytelling. They can touch, effect, and inspire – not just entertain. And, as creators, we can reach beyond the comic book fan base to the all-important non-comic masses. What a sad, yet perfect time, to demonstrate this ability. And one we should certainly keep in mind, as we continue the work of the medium we love.

On a much lighter note, this issue of *Sketch* is once again seam-bursting with good stuff – that is, once you get past the great new, custom Joe Kubert cover! During the scintillating Silver age, he was responsible for my driving a lot of Cray-Pas to death in fits of Kubert-inspired excitement. I have no doubt his super-powered sons are having the same effect on today's wanna-bes (not to mention a couple of working pros). Thank you, Kubert Dynasty, for your contributions this issue.

Inside, Tom Bierbaum continues his line of articles with yet another thought-provoking and instructional column that writers might want to be taking some notes from. Pencil pushers will get some useful basics from mighty Mitch Byrd's second *Sketch* column, if you can stop checking out his cool new illustrations to learn something. And awesome Aaron Hubrich files in with another of his great computer coloring columns, raising the *Sketch* computer-coloring department to a Res level we hadn't been able to touch before. I think this guy is terrific, and I'm pleased to see that all you readers agree!

All this is rounded out with our usual fun-filled features while we're doing the Monkey Dance in the *Sketch* offices, in anticipation of next issue's "Sure to Bundolo" interview with the fantastic Frank Cho! That's right – the Monkey King is coming! I know you'll be here for this one, as *Sketch* brings you our most exciting interview to date with this incredible talent. Be here, Minions of the Monkey.

Tand unk *Sketch*, yo.

F



Corrections:

The cover photo of George Pérez is courtesy of Mr. Paul Schiraldi.

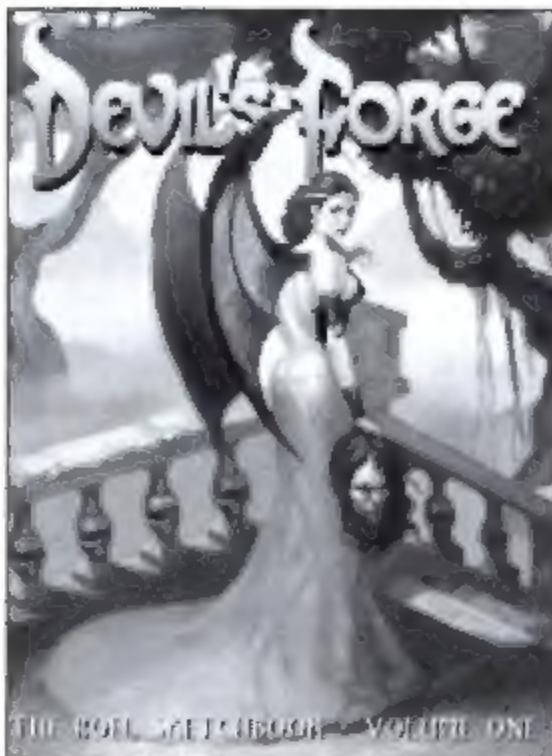
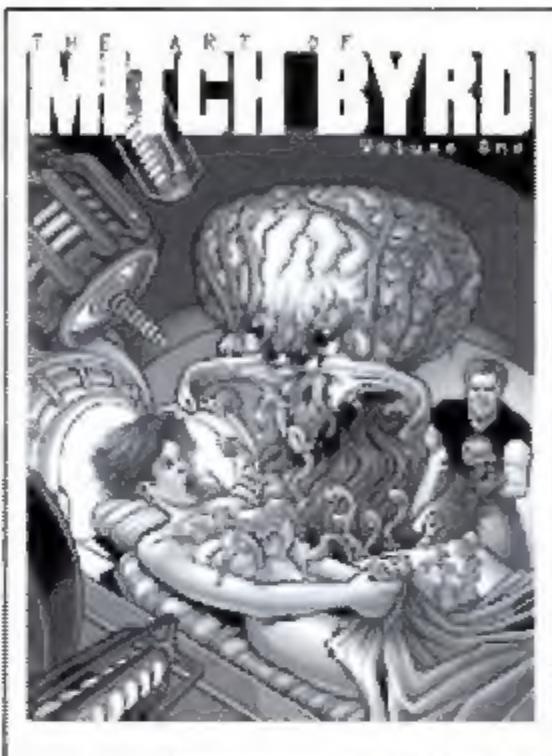
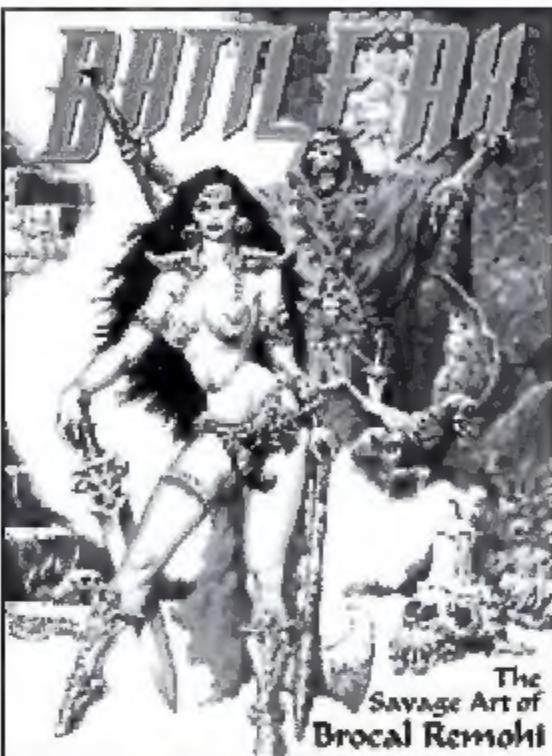
The cover illustration is by George Pérez and colorist Tom Smith, not Bob Smith.

Amongst other regrettable typos, all illustrations in the article are copyright/trademark their respective (not "prespected" owners.) I'd especially like to point out that the copyright notices for Crimson Plague (which is copyrighted and trademarked to George Pérez) were mislabeled as "Crimson" which is a series copyrighted and trademarked to Humberto Ramos. The two series are unrelated.

I apologize to Mr. Pérez, his fans, and associates, for any confusion caused (and to *Sketch* readers for the untidiness). I'd also like to personally thank Andy Mangels for his painstaking assistance with proofing and correcting the interview.

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Another view into Blas' world shows off his film, paperback and personal projects.

Masquerade
The Art of Maren
A master of all mediums, Maren displays the pencils that became his paintings.

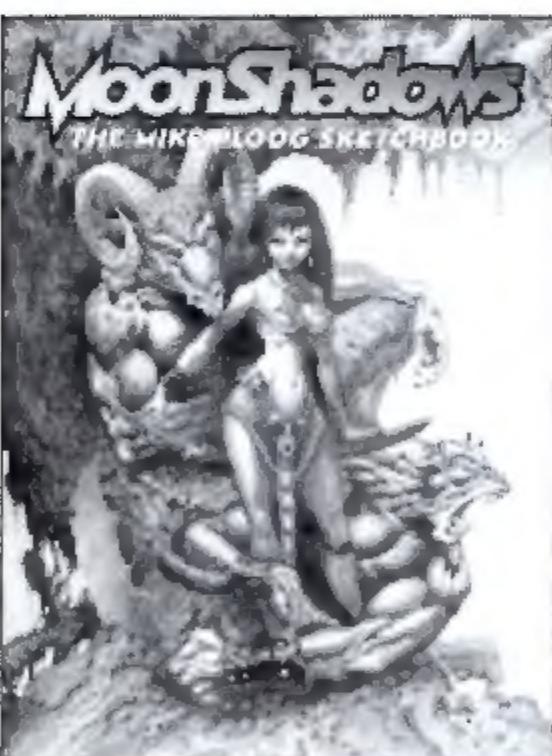
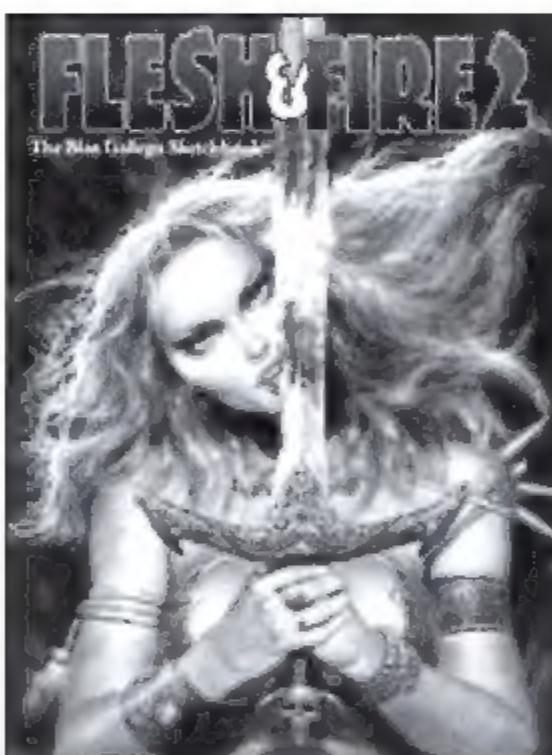
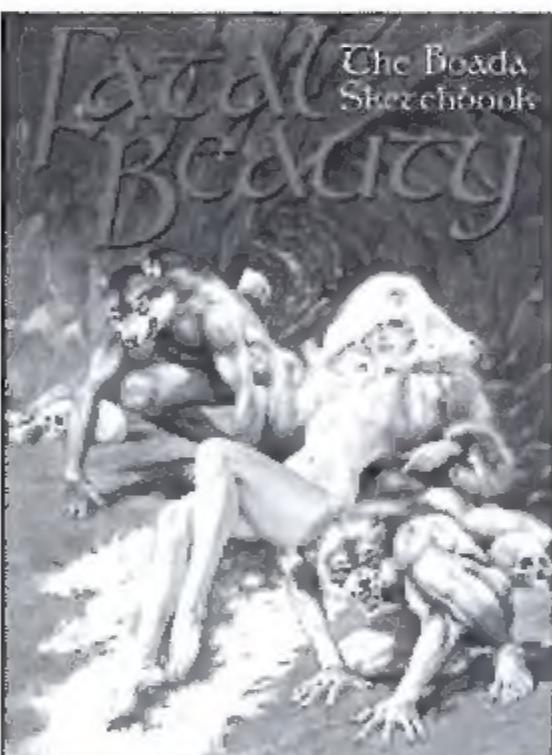
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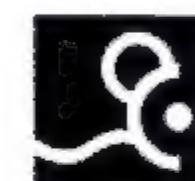
THE LITTLE WHITE MOUSE BENEFIT PRINT

In response to the World Trade Tower tragedy of September 11th, Paul Sizer will be offering an art print honoring the New York City firefighters and rescue workers who lost their lives. The money generated by sales of the 11" x 17" art print will go directly to The New York Fire 9-11 Disaster Relief Fund, a relief service that provides financial support to the families of the firefighters and rescue workers who died saving others during the attack. Blue Line Pro, the publishers of Sizer's comic series LITTLE WHITE MOUSE, have stepped up to the plate and will facilitate the production and sales of the print through their own online store. Sizer will oversee the entire project and personally forward the donations collected to the fund's administrators.

The Little White Mouse Benefit Print is available to view in the blinking "News Updates" section of the Little White Mouse Flash website (www.littlewhitemouse.com). From there, people can link directly to the exclusive sales page within the Blue Line Pro online store (www.bluelinepro.com) or to The New York Fire 9-11 Disaster Relief Fund website for more information. For a small donation of \$10.00 or more, supporters will receive one 11" x 17" LWM Benefit digital art print on hi-gloss photo grade paper, mailed directly to them. People can pay either by credit card at Blue Line Pro's special PayPal (lwmbenefit@bluelinepro.com), by phone at 859-282-0096 or mail to:
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"It's certainly easier to write about having boundless hope in a comic book story than to actually manifest it in real life..."

-Paul Sizer



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